



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

Office of  
Research and  
Analysis

Current Perspectives on SNAP Participation

---

# **Trends in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates: Fiscal Year 2002 to Fiscal Year 2009**

## Current Perspectives on SNAP Participation

---

### **Titles in this series** (continued on inside back cover):

<b>Trends in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates: 2001 to 2008</b> Joshua Leftin	June 2010
<b>Trends in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates: 2000 to 2007</b> Joshua Leftin and Kari Wolkwitz	June 2009
<b>Trends in Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: 2000 to 2006</b> Kari Wolkwitz	June 2008
<b>Trends in Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: 1999 to 2005</b> Kari Wolkwitz	June 2007
<b>Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: 2004</b> Allison Barrett and Anni Poikolainen	June 2006
<b>Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: 2003</b> Karen Cunnyingham	July 2005
<b>Trends in Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: 1999 to 2002</b> Karen Cunnyingham	September 2004
<b>Trends in Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: 1999 to 2001</b> Karen Cunnyingham	June 2003
<b>Trends in Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: 1994 to 2000</b> Karen Cunnyingham	June 2002
<b>Trends in Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: 1994 to 1999</b> Randy Rosso	October 2001
<b>Trends in Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: Focus on September 1997</b> Laura Castner and Scott Cody	November 1999
<b>Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: January 1994</b> Michael Stavrianos	March 1997
<b>Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: January 1992</b> Carole Trippe and Julie Sykes	October 1994
<b>Dynamics of the Food Stamp Program as Reported in the Survey of Income and Program Participation</b> Nancy R. Burstein	January 1993
<b>Participation in the Food Stamp Program: A Multivariate Analysis</b> Alberto Martini	March 1992
<b>Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: January 1988</b> Carole Trippe and Pat Doyle	July 1992
<b>Trends in Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: 1976 to 1990</b> Carole Trippe, Pat Doyle, and Andrew Asher	July 1992



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

3101 Park Center Drive  
Room 1014 Alexandria,  
VA 22302

---

Trends in Supplemental Nutrition  
Assistance Program Participation Rates:  
Fiscal Year 2002 to Fiscal Year 2009

Joshua Leftin, Esa Eslami, and Mark Strayer

A product of  
Mathematica Policy Research  
600 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Suite 550  
Washington, DC 20024

August 2011

*Final Report*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communications of program information (Braille, large point, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (Voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report was prepared by Joshua Leftin, Esa Eslami, and Mark Strayer of Mathematica Policy Research for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Office of Research and Analysis. Many individuals made important contributions to this report. The authors thank Karen Cunyningham, Carole Trippe, and Laura Castner for providing guidance and reviewing the report; Joel Smith and Bruce Schechter for providing programming support; and Felita Buckner for word-processing support. The authors also thank Jenny Genser, Carol Olander, Kathryn Law, Bob Dalrymple, Melissa Abelev, Michael DePiro, Angela Kline, Vicky Robinson, Shelia Little, Larry Tropp, Mary Rose Conroy, Autumn McCain, Walter Zaumseil and Nick Manthos of FNS for providing guidance and program information.

This work was conducted under contract AG-3198-K-10-0018 with FNS. An electronic version of this report is available at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/ora/MENU/Published/snap/SNAPPartNational.htm>.

Author:	Joshua Leftin
Mathematica Project Director:	Carole Trippe
Mathematica Project Number:	06773.701
FNS Project Officer:	Jenny Genser
FNS Contract Number:	AG-3198-K-10-0018

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

## CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	xiii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
SUMMARY OF ESTIMATED PARTICIPATION RATES FOR FY 2009.....	3
RECENT TRENDS IN PARTICIPATION RATES .....	4
PARTICIPATION RATES FOR SUBGROUPS IN FY 2009.....	6
TRENDS IN PARTICIPATION RATES FOR SUBGROUPS.....	7
BENEFIT RECEIPT RATES IN FY 2009.....	8
FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH CHANGES IN PARTICIPATION RATES.....	9
METHODOLOGY .....	11
REFERENCES .....	21
APPENDIX A: SELECTED INDIVIDUAL AND HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATION RATES AND BENEFIT RECEIPT RATES IN FY 2009.....	23
APPENDIX B: DETAILED PARTICIPATION RATES IN FY 2009.....	27
APPENDIX C: CHANGE IN INDIVIDUAL SNAP PARTICIPATION RATES, 1988 TO 2009 .....	41
APPENDIX D: METHODOLOGY .....	45
APPENDIX E: SAMPLING ERROR OF PARTICIPATION RATE ESTIMATES.....	79
APPENDIX F: ECONOMIC AND POLICY INFLUENCES ON SNAP.....	85
APPENDIX G: CHANGES IN THE CPS ASEC OVER TIME.....	99
APPENDIX H: SNAP ELIGIBILITY PARAMETERS .....	103

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

## TABLES

1	Individual and Household Participation Rates and Benefit Receipt Rates, Fiscal Year 2009.....	14
2	Number of Eligible and Participating Individuals, Households, and Benefits, and Participation Rates, 1976 to 2009.....	15
3	SNAP Individual Participation Rates by Demographic Characteristics, FY 2008 and FY 2009 .....	17
4	SNAP Individual Participation Rates by Economic Characteristics of Households, FY 2008 and FY 2009.....	18
5	SNAP Participation Rates by Selected Characteristics, FY 2002 to FY 2009 .....	20

## APPENDIX TABLES

A.1	Individual Participation Rates and Benefit Receipt Rates by Demographic Characteristics, Fiscal Year 2009.....	25
A.2	Participation Rates and Benefit Receipt Rates by Household-Level Demographic and Economic Characteristics, Fiscal Year 2009 .....	26
B.1	Individual and Household Participation Rates and Benefit Receipt Rates, Fiscal Year 2009.....	29
B.2	Individual Participation Rates by Household Size, Fiscal Year 2009 .....	29
B.3	Individual Participation Rates by Demographic Characteristics, Fiscal Year 2009.....	30
B.4	Individual Participation Rates by Economic Characteristics of Households, Fiscal Year 2009.....	31
B.5A	Individual Participation Rates by Household Composition, Fiscal Year 2009—Households with Children.....	32
B.5B	Individual Participation Rates by Household Composition, Fiscal Year 2009—Households with One Adult and Children .....	33
B.5C	Individual Participation Rates by Household Composition, Fiscal Year 2009—Households with Married Household Head and Children.....	34
B.5D	Individual Participation Rates by Household Composition, Fiscal Year 2009—Households with Other Multiple Adults and Children.....	35

B.5E	Individual Participation Rates by Household Composition, Fiscal Year 2009—Households with No Children .....	36
B.6	Participation Rates for Individuals in Households Without any Noncitizens or Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration, Fiscal Year 2009 .....	37
B.7	Household Participation Rates, Fiscal Year 2009 .....	38
B.8	Benefit Receipt Rates by Household–Level Demographic and Economic Characteristics, Fiscal Year 2009.....	39
B.9	Benefit Receipt Rates by Individual–Level Demographic Characteristics, Fiscal Year 2009 .....	40
C.1	Change in Individual SNAP Participation Rates 1988 to 2009 .....	43
D.1	Percent of Nonelderly, Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration Who Are Eligible for SNAP, by Reason for Eligibility, October 2008 through March 2009 .....	67
D.2	Results for the SNAP Net Income Regression Equations.....	68
D.3A	Fiscal Year 2009 SNAP Eligibility Parameters, October 2008 through March 2009.....	72
D.3B	Fiscal Year 2009 SNAP Eligibility Parameters, April 2009 through September 2009.....	73
D.4	Unweighted Sample Sizes for the CPS ASEC, 1977 to 2010 .....	74
D.5	Unweighted Counts of Households by the Probability of Being Eligible, FY 2009 Median Month.....	75
D.6	Unweighted Sample Sizes for the SNAP QC Case Records.....	76
E.1	Sampling Error Associated with Selected Participation Rates, Fiscal Year 2009.....	83
F.1	Summary of Major Influences on SNAP Participation Rates, 1976–2009 .....	87
F.2	Major Economic Indicators, Calendar Years 1976–2009.....	89
F.3A	Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Income Limits.....	91
F.3B	Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Asset Limits .....	92
F.3C	Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Benefits .....	93
F.3D	Selected Features of SNAP Under Past legislation—Deductions.....	94

F.3E	Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Accounting Period, Categorical Eligibility .....	95
F.3F	Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Work Registration Requirements and Time Limits .....	96
F.3G	Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Treatment of Noncitizens .....	97
F.3H	Selected Features of SNAP under Past Legislation—Other Changes .....	98
G.1	Changes in the CPS ASEC Over Time .....	101
H.1	Selected SNAP Eligibility Parameters, 1976 to 2009 .....	105

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

## FIGURES

1	Trends in SNAP Participation Rates, 1976 to 2009 .....	16
2	Individual Participation Rates by Subgroup, FY 2009.....	19

## APPENDIX FIGURES

D.1	Trends in Individual Participation Rates by Data Source, 1984 to 2009 .....	77
F.1	Trends in SNAP Individual Participation Rates, Poverty Rates, and Unemployment Rates, 1976–2009.....	90

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the Food Stamp Program (FSP), helps low-income individuals purchase food so they can obtain a nutritious diet. One important measure of the program's performance is its ability to reach its target population, as indicated by the proportion of people eligible for benefits who actually participate.

Of the nearly 45 million individuals eligible for SNAP benefits in an average month in fiscal year (FY) 2009, 32 million (72 percent) participated and more than 12 million did not. While SNAP served 72 percent of all eligible individuals, it provided 91 percent of the SNAP benefits available to all eligible individuals. The difference in the two rates is because the neediest individuals, who were eligible for higher benefits, participated at higher rates than other eligible individuals. Nationally, the participation rate among individuals increased by more than one percentage point between FY 2008 and FY 2009, after remaining virtually the same from FY 2006 through FY 2007 and increasing nearly two points from FY 2007 to FY 2008.

We made several methodological improvements when developing the FY 2002 through FY 2009 participation rates in this report. Motivations for these improvements include making use of more recent data and of methodologies developed for the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)-based microsimulation model. The improvements also allow us to better account for differences between data from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Quality Control (SNAP QC) datafile (from which we generate estimates of SNAP participants), and those from the Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) (from which we generate estimates of individuals and households eligible for SNAP). Because the current methodology changed substantially from the methodology used for the previous report in the series, participation rates presented in this report for FY 2002 through FY 2008 are not consistent with those published in last year's report (Leftin, 2010). In particular, the estimated individual participation rate for FY 2008 presented here (71 percent) is four percentage points higher than the previously published rate for that year (67 percent).

Because we are still assessing further improvements to our participation rate methodology that have not yet been implemented, it is likely that when the enhancements are completed and applied, prior year estimates will change again in next year's report. Therefore, while the methodology used to generate the rates in this report constitutes an improvement from that in prior years, the rates do not incorporate all the likely forthcoming changes and should thus be considered transitional. Enhancements made for this report and the possible future enhancements are described in the methodology appendix of this report.

From FY 2008 to FY 2009, the number of SNAP participants increased by 18 percent and the number of eligible individuals increased by 15 percent. The large increase in the number of participants was likely attributable to the deterioration of the economy, expansions in SNAP eligibility, and continued outreach efforts. The increase in the number of eligible individuals likely occurred in part due to the economic recession and in part due to two pieces of legislation that increased eligibility. The SNAP provisions in the 2008 Food, Conservation, and Energy Act (2008 Farm Bill), effective October 1, 2008, included an increase in the minimum SNAP benefit for one- and two-person households and the standard deduction, eliminated the cap on the dependent care deduction, and excluded most education and retirement accounts from countable resources when determining SNAP eligibility. In addition, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), which took effect on April 1, 2009, included changes that raised SNAP benefit levels and

allowed states to suspend rules that limited the length of participation for nondisabled adults without dependents.

The individual participation rate in FY 2009 is 18 points higher than it was in FY 2002, in part because States have increased outreach to low-income households, implemented program simplifications, and streamlined application processes to make it easier for eligible individuals to apply for and receive SNAP benefits. Most States also have reduced the amount of information that recipients must report during their certification period to maintain their eligibility and benefit levels, making it easier for low-income households to participate.

Some demographic and economic subgroups experienced increases in participation rates in FY 2009, while others did not have a statistically significant increase or decrease, and a few experienced a modest decrease. Most increases were modest, but a few were as high as 5 or 6 percentage points.

Rates remained relatively high for children, individuals in households with incomes below the poverty line, and recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) relative to rates for prior years prepared for this report using the FY 2009 rate methodology. At least 89 percent of all eligible individuals within each of these groups participated in FY 2009.

The participation rate was less than 37 percent for eligible elderly adults (age 60 and older), individuals living in households with incomes above the poverty line, and individuals in households eligible for benefits between 1 and 50 percent of the program maximum for their household size. Participation rates for nondisabled childless adults subject to work registration also were lower than average, at 56 percent. A few groups with lower than average participation rates saw increases between FY 2008 and FY 2009. While noncitizens participated at a rate of only 56 percent in FY 2009, the rate increased from 50 percent in FY 2008. Similarly, the participation rate for citizen children living with noncitizen adults increased from 57 percent in FY 2008 to 63 percent in FY 2009, and the rate for households with earnings increased by 2 points from FY 2008 to 60 percent.

## INTRODUCTION

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the Food Stamp Program (FSP), helps low-income individuals purchase food so they can obtain a nutritious diet. The average number of people eligible for SNAP benefits under normal program rules<sup>1</sup> served in a month increased by 18 percent between fiscal year (FY) 2008 and FY 2009, from 27 million to 32 million. A variety of factors, discussed below, account for the large increase over FY 2008.

Most individuals whose financial resources fall below certain income and asset thresholds are eligible for SNAP. Additional people are categorically eligible for SNAP because they live in households where each member receives Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or, in some places, General Assistance (GA), or because they meet other broader State categorical eligibility criteria. However, not all of those who are eligible participate in the program. While some choose not to participate, others are unaware that they are eligible. When eligible individuals do not participate, they lose out on nutrition assistance that could stretch their food dollars at the grocery store, and their communities lose out on the economic benefits provided by new SNAP dollars flowing into local markets.

One important measure of the program's performance is its ability to reach its target population. In FY 2009, the national participation rate among eligible individuals was 72 percent, up from 71 percent in FY 2008. The household participation rate was also 72 percent in FY 2009, while the benefit receipt rate was 91 percent.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> The participation totals in this report do not include those who received disaster assistance or ineligible households and some categorically eligible households that were income ineligible. We removed from our FY 2009 individual participant totals an estimated national monthly average of approximately 30,000 people receiving disaster assistance and about 571,000 ineligible participants (1.7 percent of all participants). We also removed nearly 697,000 participants (2.1 percent) who were categorically eligible but not income-eligible. See Appendix D for more details.

<sup>2</sup> The benefit receipt rate measures the amount of benefits received as a proportion of total benefits that would be paid out if every eligible household were to participate.

The FY 2009 participation rate estimates in this report are based on fiscal year data from the combined calendar year (CY) 2009 and 2010 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) files, and FY 2009 SNAP administrative data. All the estimates for earlier years in this report likewise are based on CPS and administrative data from the appropriate years.

We made several methodological improvements when developing the FY 2002 through FY 2009 participation rates in this report. Motivations for these improvements include making use of more recent data and of methodologies developed for the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)-based microsimulation model. The improvements also allow us to better account for differences between administrative data from the SNAP Quality Control (SNAP QC) datafile (from which we generate estimates of SNAP participants), and those from the CPS ASEC (from which we generate estimates of individuals and households eligible for SNAP). Because the current methodology changed substantially from the methodology used for the previous report in the series, participation rates presented in this report for FY 2002 through FY 2008 are not consistent with those published in last year's report (Leftin, 2010). In particular, the estimated individual participation rate for FY 2008 presented here (71 percent) is four percentage points higher than the previously published rate for that year (67 percent).

Because we are still assessing further improvements to our participation rate methodology that have not yet been implemented, it is likely that when the enhancements are completed and applied, prior year estimates will change again in next year's report. Therefore, while the methodology used to generate the rates in this report constitutes an improvement from that in prior years, the rates do not incorporate all the likely forthcoming changes and should thus be considered transitional. Enhancements made for this report and the possible future enhancements are described in the methodology appendix of this report.

In addition to presenting the overall FY 2009 participation rate in this report, we present participation rates for subgroups of the eligible population, describe recent and historical trends in these rates, and explain the estimation methodology. We include detailed tables on FY 2009 subgroup participation rates in Appendices A and B. In Appendix C, we show the change in individual SNAP participation rates since 1988. In Appendices D and E, we present an in-depth explanation of the methodology and the sampling error of the participation rate estimates. In Appendix F, we list historical economic and policy influences on SNAP and we list changes in the CPS over time in Appendix G. Appendix H includes SNAP eligibility parameters for previous years. We present detailed historical rates for FY 2002 through FY 2008 in a separate document, “Detailed Tables of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates: 2002 to 2008.”<sup>3</sup>

## **SUMMARY OF ESTIMATED PARTICIPATION RATES FOR FY 2009**

Of the nearly 45 million individuals eligible for SNAP under normal rules in an average month of FY 2009, 32 million actually participated (Table 1).<sup>4</sup> The individual SNAP participation rate reached 72 percent in FY 2009, an increase of more than one percentage point from FY 2008. The household participation rate in FY 2009 (72 percent) was similar to the individual rate, and the benefit receipt rate in FY 2009 was 91 percent. The benefit receipt rate is consistently higher than the individual and household rates because the neediest individuals, who are eligible for higher benefits, tend to participate at higher rates than other eligible individuals.

---

<sup>3</sup> This document can be found at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/ora/MENU/Published/snap/SNAPPartNational.htm>

<sup>4</sup> All tables and figures are presented at the end of the main text, just before the references.

## RECENT TRENDS IN PARTICIPATION RATES

In FY 2009, the participation rate for eligible individuals rose by more than one percentage point to 72 percent. Previously, the rate rose by two points from FY 2007 to FY 2008 after remaining virtually the same from FY 2006 to FY 2007 (Table 2 and Figure 1).

From FY 2002 through FY 2006, the rate increased each year by between 2 to 5 percentage points. Throughout most of this time frame (up to 2005), both the number of individuals eligible for benefits and the number participating increase; the number of participants rose faster, however, resulting in the increased participation rates. From FY 2005 to FY 2006, the number participating continued to rise but the eligible number dropped slightly, leading to a continued rise in participation rates.

From FY 2006 to FY 2007, the number participating increased again, but the number who were eligible increased as well. Because the two percent increase in the number of individuals who were eligible was not substantially higher than the one percent increase in the number who participated, participation rates in FY 2007 did not show a statistically significant difference compared to FY 2006. Then, likely due to a worsening economy in FY 2008, the number of participants rose by seven percent from FY 2007, the highest percentage increase since the change from FY 2003 to FY 2004. Meanwhile, the number of eligible individuals rose by four percent, the largest percentage increase during the period measured. Because the percentage increase in participants was higher than the percentage increase in eligible individuals, the participation rate increased by two points (see Appendix C for annual changes in the participation rate and the number of participants and eligibles).<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> The SNAP provisions in the 2008 Food, Conservation, and Energy Act (2008 Farm Bill), effective October 1, 2008, did not have an effect on the FY 2008 participation rates because the provisions did not take effect until FY 2009.

In FY 2009, there were large increases in both the number of participants (18 percent) and the number of eligible individuals (15 percent). Because the increase in participation was higher than the increase in eligibility, the participation rate increased by more than one point.

The household participation rate increased more than 22 points from FY 2002 to FY 2009, up to 72 percent. From FY 2002 to FY 2008, the household participation rate was lower than the individual participation rate, indicating that larger households were more likely to participate in SNAP. However, the two rates began to converge in recent years, as smaller households participated at higher rates relative to earlier years; in FY 2009, the household and individual rates were nearly identical. The benefit receipt rate rose 24 points, from 68 percent in FY 2002 to 92 percent in FY 2008. The decrease of less than one percentage point to 91 percent in FY 2009 was not statistically significant.

The number of eligible individuals decreased between 1999 and 2000 and then increased from 2000 to 2002 and from FY 2002 to FY 2005.<sup>6</sup> Factors that contributed to the increase include States' exclusion of more vehicles from the SNAP resource test, making it easier to own a reliable vehicle and remain eligible; restoration of eligibility for many legal immigrants; and an increase in the number of unemployed individuals between 2001 and 2003. The number of eligible individuals then fell by more than one million from FY 2005 to FY 2006 before increasing by more than 8 million from FY 2006 to FY 2009. This recent fluctuation in eligible individuals likely could be attributed to changes in the state of the economy: the number of unemployed people fell from 7.6 million in 2005 to 7.0 million in 2006 before steadily increasing from 2007 to 2009, with the largest increase – 5.4 million – occurring from 2008 to 2009.

---

<sup>6</sup> For this report, we developed methodologically consistent participation rates for FY 2002 through FY 2009. We are unable to directly compare these rates with those for earlier years.

Although the number of people in poverty did not change by a statistically significant amount from 2005 to 2006, the number did increase slightly in 2007, and substantially in 2008 and in 2009. In addition, program changes that came into effect in 2009 expanded eligibility.

The number of individuals participating increased by nearly 14 million between FY 2002 and FY 2009, including an increase of 5 million people from FY 2008 to FY 2009 alone. While 9 percent of the U.S. population, on average, participated in SNAP in FY 2008, about 11 percent participated in FY 2009. The number of eligible individuals who did not participate dropped from about 16 million in FY 2003 to a low of about 11 million in FY 2006. Since then, it has fluctuated at around 11 to 12 million each year.

### **PARTICIPATION RATES FOR SUBGROUPS IN FY 2009**

SNAP participation rates vary by demographic and economic subgroup. Historically, participation rates have been relatively high for children, individuals in households with incomes below the poverty line, and TANF recipients. This pattern continued in FY 2009, with at least 89 percent of all eligible individuals from these groups participating (Tables 3 and 4, Figure 2).

Participation rates over time have historically been lower than average for individuals who are elderly, living in households with incomes above poverty, eligible for low monthly benefits (benefit levels less than half of the program maximum for their household sizes), noncitizens, citizen children living with noncitizens, nonelderly nondisabled childless adults, and individuals living in households with earnings. These trends continued in FY 2009. Just 34 percent of eligible elderly individuals (age 60 and over) and 31 percent of individuals in households with incomes above the poverty line participated in FY 2009. Individuals living in households eligible for a benefit at or below 50 percent of the maximum benefit for their household size participated at a rate of 37 percent in FY 2009. The participation rate for noncitizens was 56 percent and that for citizen children living with noncitizen adults was 63 percent. Nondisabled childless adults subject to work

registration participated at a rate of 56 percent. The participation rate for individuals in eligible households with earnings remained lower than average, at 60 percent.

## **TRENDS IN PARTICIPATION RATES FOR SUBGROUPS**

Most subgroups experienced annual participation rate increases from the earlier years covered in this report through the latter years, with the exception of stabilization or slight decreases from FY 2006 through FY 2008 (Table 5). For example, the participation rate for children increased every year beginning in FY 2002 before decreasing between FY 2006 and FY 2007 from 89 percent to 87 percent. It then increased again in FY 2008 and FY 2009, reaching 92 percent. Other subgroups that fit this general pattern include individuals in households with earnings, small households (with one or two members), nondisabled childless adults subject to work requirements, and noncitizens.

Like participation rates for most subgroups, the participation rate for elderly individuals remained the same or increased each year from FY 2002 through FY 2006, reaching 34 percent in FY 2006. Unlike most rates, however, it has fluctuated between 33 and 36 percent from FY 2006 through FY 2009. The more than one percentage point drop from FY 2008 to FY 2009 was not statistically significant.

Participation rates for a few other subgroups with low participation rates also did not change significantly from FY 2008 to FY 2009. The participation rate for individuals in households with incomes above the poverty line remained unchanged at 31 percent, and that for individuals in households with Social Security income remained stable at around 51 percent (Table 4).

Although the overall individual participation rate increased from 71 percent in FY 2008 to 72 percent in FY 2009, the only benefit level at which the rate increased was the maximum benefit. The rate for individuals in households with benefits at or below 50 percent of the maximum decreased from 39 percent in FY 2008 to 37 percent in FY 2009, and the rate for individuals in households with benefits between 51 percent and 99 percent of the maximum decreased from 96 percent in FY

2008 to 90 percent in FY 2009. However, in FY 2009, more individuals were in a subgroup with higher participation rates (individuals living in high-benefit households) and fewer were in a subgroup with lower participation rates (individuals living in low-benefit households) compared to FY 2008. Specifically, while the number of participants with benefits at or below 50 percent of the maximum decreased from about 7 million in FY 2008 to a little over 6 million in FY 2009, the number of participants with benefits greater than 50 percent of the maximum increased from 20 million to 26 million over that time period (Table 4).<sup>7</sup> As a result of this shift, although participation rates dropped for most subgroups, overall participation rates increased.

### **BENEFIT RECEIPT RATES IN FY 2009**

Individuals eligible for larger benefits tend to participate in SNAP at higher rates than those eligible for smaller benefits, resulting in benefit receipt rates that typically are higher than individual or household participation rates.<sup>8</sup> Households with children and those with household incomes at one percent to 50 percent of poverty had among the highest benefit receipt rates in FY 2009. Households with elderly members and those with household incomes above the poverty line had among the lowest benefit receipt rates. They received 44 and 46 percent, respectively, of the benefits for which all eligible households with these characteristics were entitled.

---

<sup>7</sup> The number of participants with benefits at or below 50 percent of the maximum is derived by summing the number of participants in Table 4 with benefits between one and 25 percent of the maximum and between 26 and 50 percent of the maximum. The number of participants with benefits above 50 percent of the maximum is derived by summing the number of participants with benefits between 51 and 75 percent of the maximum, between 76 and 99 percent of the maximum, and receiving a maximum benefit (100 percent).

<sup>8</sup> See Tables A.1 and A.2 in Appendix A for benefit receipt rates by subgroup.

Among age groups, children had the highest prorated benefit receipt rates,<sup>9</sup> and elderly individuals had the lowest. Individuals who were not employed received a higher percentage of prorated benefits than employed individuals.

## **FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH CHANGES IN PARTICIPATION RATES**

As shown in Figure 1, overall participation rates increased substantially in the late 1970s, leveled off in the early and mid-1980s, and then increased again through the early 1990s.<sup>10</sup> After peaking in 1994, individual participation rates began an eight-year decrease. This decrease can be attributed to a combination of changes in the economy and program rules, trends in other public assistance programs, and the participation decisions of eligible people.<sup>11</sup> Specifically, the strong economy increased job opportunities for low-income households, thus reducing eligibility for and participation in SNAP. In addition, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) added a new focus on moving people from welfare to work and reduced eligibility for many noncitizens and nonelderly nondisabled childless adults. The increased emphasis on work and the reduced TANF caseload lowered SNAP participation rates because households not receiving public assistance are also less likely to participate in SNAP.<sup>12</sup>

From FY 2002 to FY 2006, factors such as increased outreach and improved access to SNAP contributed to the rise in participation rates. During this period, States increased outreach to low-income households and implemented program simplifications to make it easier for eligible

---

<sup>9</sup> An individual's prorated benefits are calculated by dividing the household benefit by the number of people in the household. Benefit receipt rates by individual-level characteristics are calculated by summing the prorated benefits of individuals with the selected characteristic.

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix C (Table C.1) for the change in individual participation rates from 1988 to 2009.

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix F for an annual summary of economic and policy influences on participation rates.

<sup>12</sup> During much of the period of participation rate decline in the 1990s, categorical eligibility for SNAP was restricted to units in which all members received cash public assistance. As a result, although most individuals who stopped receiving TANF cash benefits were still eligible for SNAP, some were unaware of their continuing eligibility and others chose not to apply or recertify.

individuals to apply for and receive SNAP benefits. Many State SNAP agencies, for example, now provide extended hours of operation, waive the requirement for face-to-face interviews, and have streamlined the overall application process. Most States also have reduced the amount of information that recipients must report during their certification period to maintain their eligibility and benefit levels, making it easier for low-income households to participate. In addition, as of June 2009, 19 States provided transitional SNAP benefits to individuals moving from the TANF program to work. This is an option available to States to help support families as they move off TANF cash assistance. Benefits can be continued for up to five months in an amount equal to the amount received by the household prior to TANF termination with adjustments for loss of TANF income.<sup>13</sup>

The number of eligible individuals also increased from FY 2002 to FY 2005, but at a lower rate than the number of participating individuals. Contributing factors to this increase include State expansions in vehicle policies and the restoration of eligibility to many noncitizens under the 2002 Farm Bill. The number of eligible individuals dropped by three percent from FY 2005 to FY 2006, the same period during which unemployment fell.

From FY 2006 to FY 2007, the number of participants continued to increase as a result of these outreach and access initiatives. However, economic factors, including a higher national poverty rate and an increase in the number of unemployed persons, resulted in an increase in the number of eligible individuals as well. The number participating and the number eligible increased at roughly the same rate. From FY 2007 to FY 2008, the number of participants increased at a higher rate than the number of eligible individuals.

In FY 2009, the number of SNAP participants increased by 18 percent. This continued growth from FY 2008 to FY 2009 is likely attributable to the deterioration of the economy, expansions in SNAP eligibility, and continued outreach efforts. The number of eligible individuals increased by

---

<sup>13</sup> Food and Nutrition Service “State Options Report” (Eighth Edition).

more than 15 percent from FY 2008 to FY 2009, in part due to the worsening economy and in part due to two pieces of legislation. The SNAP provisions in the 2008 Farm Bill, effective October 1, 2008, included an increase in the minimum SNAP benefit for one- and two-person households and the standard deduction. For example, the standard deduction in the contiguous United States for one to three-person households increased by ten dollars. The 2008 Farm Bill also eliminated the cap on the dependent care deduction, and excluded most education and retirement accounts from countable resources when determining SNAP eligibility. In addition, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), which took effect on April 1, 2009, included changes that raised SNAP benefit levels by nearly 14 percent and suspended time-limited benefits for nondisabled adults without dependents.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Participation rates are calculated as the ratio of the number of individuals participating in SNAP to the number of individuals eligible for SNAP, with the ratio expressed as a percentage. The number of participants is estimated from SNAP administrative data and the number of eligible individuals is estimated from CPS ASEC data. The participation rate estimates presented in this report differ methodologically from estimates published in prior reports. Motivations for these improvements include making use of more recent data and of methodologies developed for the SIPP-based microsimulation model. The improvements also allow us to better account for differences between data from the SNAP QC datafile and that from the CPS ASEC. In this section, we provide an overview of the methodology and highlight key changes, focusing first on our estimation of the number of participating individuals and then on the number of eligible individuals. The methodology is described in more detail in Appendix D.

The estimates of participants for FY 2009 are from the FY 2009 SNAP Statistical Summary of Operations (Program Operations) and the FY 2009 SNAP QC data.<sup>14</sup> Similar data files were used for previous years' participant estimates. We use administrative counts of participants because SNAP participation is underreported in the CPS.

From the administrative data, we use the average monthly number of participants during the 12 months of the fiscal year. The administrative data are then adjusted to exclude participants who receive disaster assistance, such as those receiving disaster benefits in the wake of hurricanes, floods, tornados, and severe storms, and those receiving benefits in error since neither of these groups are included in the SNAP QC data.

We also make adjustments to the participant counts to ensure consistency between the participation rate numerator and denominator. Specifically, because we do not include households categorically eligible through noncash Public Assistance (PA) programs in our eligibility estimate, we remove from our participant count non-pure cash PA households that do not appear to be income-eligible for SNAP. However, because the assets of categorically eligible households usually are not recorded on the file, we are unable to identify which of these households would fail the asset test if they were not categorically eligible. As a result, we do not remove any households from the numerator based on their assets.

For this report, we implemented several methodological changes to how we estimate the number of SNAP participants for the rate's numerator. The changes included:

- **Reweighting the SNAP QC data for FY 2002 through FY 2004 to be consistent with the methodology used to weight data files for FY 2005 and later.** Specifically, we weighted the files so that weighted SNAP QC data match adjusted Program Operations counts of households, individuals, and benefit amounts.

---

<sup>14</sup> In reports for years prior to 2007, we referred to these data as FSP Quality Control (FSPQC) data.

- **Incorporating corrected SNAP Program Operations data from Missouri for FY 2003 through FY 2008.**
- **Implementing some coding changes in the FY 2002 through FY 2009 SNAP QC files to correct for overreporting of TANF receipt in California.**

The 2009 estimates of eligible individuals were derived using a 2009 fiscal year eligibility file based on two combined years of CPS ASEC data; estimates for FY 2002 through FY 2008 presented in this report were similarly derived using the two CPS ASEC files appropriate for each of those years.<sup>15</sup> This represents a methodological change—estimates presented in prior reports for those years were based on a calendar year of CPS ASEC data and a fiscal year of SNAP administrative data.

Using a microsimulation model, we estimated the number of eligible individuals by applying the SNAP eligibility rules in effect in FY 2009 to households in the CPS ASEC. These eligibility rules include the SNAP household formation rules, gross and net income thresholds, and financial and vehicle asset limits. In addition, we imputed some missing information needed to determine SNAP eligibility and produce an average monthly estimate of the number of eligible individuals.

Methodological improvements implemented in the eligibility file for this report include:

- **A fiscal year eligibility file (described above)**
- **An improved SNAP household formation methodology.** For dwelling units with certain characteristics, we now impute SNAP household formation according to patterns observed in our SIPP-based microsimulation model.
- **SSI and TANF simulations.** In prior reports, we used reported information in the CPS ASEC to identify individuals receiving SSI (in States other than California) and TANF. However, these types of income are underreported in the CPS ASEC. For the participation rates presented in this report, we simulate SSI and TANF receipt.
- **An enhanced net income imputation.** We updated the net income equation based on the results of an extensive assessment of the equation. The estimated relationships (coefficients) are presented in Table D.2.

---

<sup>15</sup> Because the CPS collects household income data for the previous calendar year, we used 2009 and 2010 CPS ASEC data to derive estimates of eligible individuals in fiscal year 2009.

- **An enhanced asset-eligibility imputation.** Because asset balances are not reported in the CPS ASEC, we use equations estimated from our SIPP-based microsimulation model to impute the probability that income-eligible households subject to the asset test are asset-eligible, and thus fully eligible. For rates presented in prior reports, we used a microsimulation model based on SIPP data for 1999. For those presented in this year’s report, we used our most recent model, based on SIPP data for 2005.

**Table 1. Individual and Household Participation Rates and Benefit Receipt Rates, Fiscal Year 2009**

	Participating (000s)	Eligible (000s)	Participation Rate (%) with 90% Confidence Interval
Individuals	32,146	44,512	72.2 +/- 1.0
SNAP Households	14,685	20,330	72.2 +/- 1.0
Benefits (in dollars)	4,040,195	4,443,998	90.9 +/- 1.5
Average SNAP Household Size	2.2		
Average Per Capita Benefit Per Month	\$125.68		

Sources: FY 2009 SNAP Program Operations, FY 2009 SNAP QC, and 2009 and 2010 CPS ASEC data.

Notes: These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. Participant and eligibility totals represent monthly averages. See Appendix D for details.

**Table 2. Number of Eligible and Participating Individuals, Households, and Benefits, and Participation Rates, 1976 to 2009**

	Eligible (000s)			Participating (000s) <sup>a</sup>			Participation Rates (%)		
	Individuals	Households	Benefits	Individuals	Households	Benefits	Individuals	Households	Benefits
September 1976 <sup>b</sup>	50,061	16,282	\$1,075,819	15,880	5,308	\$375,461	31.1	32.6	34.9
February 1978	40,175	13,984	934,427	15,387	5,286	398,066	38.3	37.8	42.6
August 1980	36,567	14,042	1,108,330	20,185	7,372	689,381	55.2	52.5	62.2
August 1982	39,364	14,538	1,352,251	20,548	7,487	785,658	52.2	51.5	58.1
August 1984	38,591	14,194	1,386,231	19,990	7,324	841,442	51.8	51.6	60.7
August 1986	40,061	15,273	1,544,833	19,069	7,102	860,472	47.6	46.5	55.7
August 1988	38,166	14,896	1,646,310	18,358	7,016	907,117	48.1	47.1	55.1
August 1990	37,631	14,523	1,905,141	20,396	7,973	1,188,808	54.2	54.9	62.4
August 1991	40,989	15,574	2,229,403	23,364	9,204	1,471,406	57.0	59.1	66.0
August 1992	43,474	16,627	2,491,671	25,759	10,238	1,749,058	59.3	61.6	70.2
August 1993	45,241	17,031	2,515,761	27,260	10,900	1,839,469	60.3	64.0	73.1
August 1994	44,327	17,040	2,473,299	27,207	11,005	1,873,953	61.4	64.6	75.8
September 1994	35,053	15,305	2,028,290	26,229	10,659	1,747,990	74.8	69.6	86.2
September 1995	34,665	14,994	2,017,983	25,213	10,374	1,751,560	72.7	69.2	86.8
September 1996	34,478	15,264	2,060,242	23,874	9,934	1,706,230	69.2	65.1	82.8
September 1997	31,818	14,692	1,913,367	20,365	8,446	1,407,148	64.0	57.5	73.5
September 1998	30,350	14,024	1,836,184	18,152	7,606	1,253,632	59.8	54.2	68.3
September 1999	29,502	13,723	1,779,829	17,081	7,280	1,199,679	57.9	53.0	67.4
FY 1999 <sup>c</sup>	30,857	14,508	1,812,128	17,705	7,481	1,256,625	57.4	51.6	69.3
FY 2000	29,458	14,235	1,741,177	16,701	7,146	1,193,970	56.7	50.2	68.6
FY 2001	31,223	15,107	1,912,260	16,834	7,250	1,240,961	53.9	48.0	64.9
FY 2002(a)	34,388	16,693	2,230,454	18,500	7,951	1,451,229	53.8	47.6	65.1
FY 2002(b)	34,182	15,989	2,144,408	18,478	7,954	1,455,518	54.1	49.7	67.9
FY 2003	36,462	17,070	2,426,022	20,577	8,892	1,712,175	56.4	52.1	70.6
FY 2004	37,342	17,489	2,579,462	23,090	9,991	1,976,344	61.8	57.1	76.6
FY 2005	37,735	17,727	2,765,622	24,510	10,737	2,255,976	65.0	60.6	81.6
FY 2006	36,460	17,124	2,683,513	25,136	11,186	2,346,568	68.9	65.3	87.4
FY 2007	37,167	17,454	2,770,779	25,461	11,427	2,437,438	68.5	65.5	88.0
FY 2008	38,575	17,985	3,012,995	27,229	12,297	2,759,830	70.6	68.4	91.6
FY 2009	44,512	20,330	4,443,998	32,146	14,685	4,040,195	72.2	72.2	90.9

Sources: SNAP Program Operations data, SNAP QC data, and CPS ASEC data for the years shown.

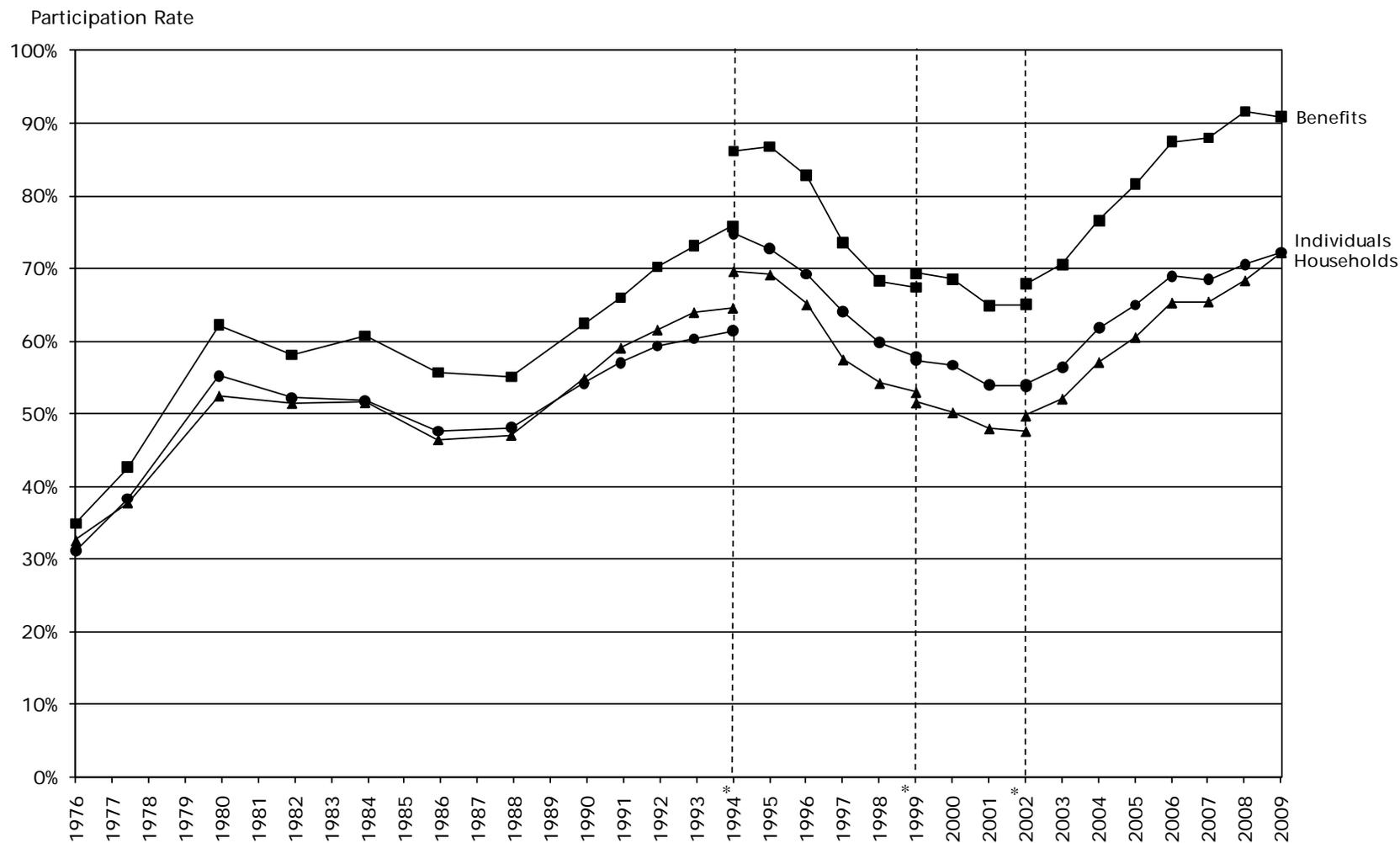
Notes: Participant and eligibility totals represent monthly averages. There are two estimates for 1994, 1999, and 2002 due to revised methodologies for determining SNAP eligibility and the number of participants. The September 1976 to August 1994 estimates are methodologically consistent, as are the September 1994 to September 1999 estimates, the FY 1999 to FY 2002(a) estimates, and the FY 2002(b) to FY 2009 estimates. Please see Appendix D for details.

<sup>a</sup> The estimates of participants in this report exclude certain participants and thus differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

<sup>b</sup> The benefit rates for 1976 and 1978 are based on the net benefit (maximum benefits – purchase requirement) and thus are consistent over all years.

<sup>c</sup> All fiscal year numbers are average monthly values.

Figure 1. Trends in SNAP Participation Rates, 1976 to 2009



Sources: SNAP Program Operations data, SNAP QC data, and CPS ASEC data for the years shown.

\*There are breaks in the time series in 1994, 1999, and 2002 due to revisions in the methodology for determining eligibility.

**Table 3. SNAP Individual Participation Rates by Demographic Characteristics, FY 2008 and FY 2009**

	Participating <sup>a</sup> Individuals (000s)		Eligible Individuals (000s)		Participation Rate (%)		
	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2008	FY 2009	Difference With 90% Confidence Interval
Individuals in All Households	27,229	32,146	38,575	44,512	70.6	72.2	1.6 +/- 1.0
Individuals by Household Size							
Small (1 to 2 members)	10,473	12,580	17,090	19,566	61.3	64.3	3.0 +/- 1.3
Medium (3 to 4 members)	10,662	12,711	13,974	16,236	76.3	78.3	2.0 +/- 3.5
Large (5 or more members)	6,093	6,854	7,511	8,710	81.1	78.7	-2.4 +/- 6.2
Age of Individual							
Children	13,186	15,277	14,940	16,662	88.3	91.7	3.4 +/- 1.7
Preschool Age (0 to 4 years)	4,551	5,281	5,098	5,582	89.3	94.6	5.4 +/- 3.1
School Age (5 to 17 years)	8,635	9,996	9,842	11,080	87.7	90.2	2.5 +/- 2.2
Nonelderly Adults (18 to 59 years)	11,564	14,185	16,689	20,037	69.3	70.8	1.5 +/- 1.4
Elderly Individuals	2,479	2,683	6,946	7,813	35.7	34.3	-1.3 +/- 1.4
Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration <sup>b</sup>	1,059	1,631	2,038	2,927	52.0	55.7	3.7 +/- 3.7
Noncitizens <sup>c</sup>	951	1,247	1,895	2,243	50.2	55.6	5.4 +/- 4.9
Citizen Children Living with Noncitizen Adults <sup>d</sup>	2,038	2,578	3,574	4,107	57.0	62.8	5.7 +/- 4.4
Individuals in Households without Any Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration or Noncitizens	23,993	27,818	32,119	36,046	74.7	77.2	2.5 +/- 1.3
Individuals by Household Composition							
Households with Children	20,385	23,809	24,701	27,999	82.5	85.0	2.5 +/- 1.5
One Adult	11,614	12,843	10,526	11,187	110.3	114.8	4.5 +/- 4.2
Married Household Head	4,523	5,699	7,957	9,636	56.8	59.1	2.3 +/- 3.6
Other Multiple Adults	2,712	3,293	4,566	5,548	59.4	59.4	0.0 +/- 4.6
Households without Children	6,843	8,336	13,874	16,513	49.3	50.5	1.2 +/- 1.3

Sources: FY 2008 and 2009 SNAP Program Operations and SNAP QC data, and 2008, 2009 and 2010 CPS ASEC data.

Notes: Participation rates over 100 percent are the result of discrepancies between the estimates of eligible and participating individuals and households, including the data from which they are estimated and differing treatment of some categorically eligible households. Participant and eligibility totals represent monthly averages. See Appendix D for more information.

<sup>a</sup> The estimates of participants in this report exclude certain participants and thus differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

<sup>b</sup> Referred to as ABAWDs in previous reports, these individuals are age 18 to 49, not disabled, not living with children under age 18, and are subject to work registration. With some exceptions, these individuals must meet work requirements or face time limits on benefit receipt.

<sup>c</sup> Noncitizens who are eligible and/or participating. This row does not include noncitizens who are outside the SNAP household but reside in the same dwelling unit.

<sup>d</sup> Citizen children living in a household with a noncitizen adult, regardless of SNAP participation or eligibility status of the adult.

**Table 4. SNAP Individual Participation Rates by Economic Characteristics of Households, FY 2008 and FY 2009**

	Participating <sup>a</sup> Individuals (000s)		Eligible Individuals (000s)		Participation Rate (%)		
	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2008	FY 2009	Difference with 90% Confidence Interval
Individuals in All Households	27,229	32,146	38,575	44,512	70.6	72.2	1.6 +/- 1.0
Individuals by Household Income Source <sup>b</sup>							
Earnings	10,651	12,503	18,452	20,897	57.7	59.8	2.1 +/- 1.8
TANF	4,001	4,337	4,344	4,501	92.1	96.4	4.3 +/- 6.5
SSI <sup>c</sup>	5,818	6,199	8,094	8,669	71.9	71.5	-0.4 +/- 3.1
Elderly SSI	1,467	1,538	2,178	2,246	67.4	68.5	1.1 +/- 5.1
Nonelderly SSI	4,433	4,725	6,202	6,701	71.5	70.5	-1.0 +/- 3.8
Social Security	4,767	5,190	9,186	10,230	51.9	50.7	-1.2 +/- 2.2
Individuals by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level							
Total Below Poverty Line	23,859	28,161	27,686	31,647	86.2	89.0	2.8 +/- 1.5
No Income	3,611	4,508	4,820	6,371	74.9	70.8	-4.2 +/- 4.0
1 to 50%	8,480	9,756	7,830	8,549	108.3	114.1	5.8 +/- 5.1
51 to 100%	11,768	13,896	15,036	16,727	78.3	83.1	4.8 +/- 2.7
Total Above Poverty Line	3,370	3,985	10,889	12,865	30.9	31.0	0.0 +/- 1.4
101 to 130%	3,164	3,695	8,990	10,331	35.2	35.8	0.6 +/- 1.8
131% or more	206	289	1,900	2,534	10.8	11.4	0.6 +/- 1.9
Individuals by Household Benefit as a Percentage of Maximum Benefit							
Minimum benefit or less	836	531	3,587	2,491	23.3	21.3	-2.0 +/- 1.6
1 to 25%	2,755	1,824	9,567	6,918	28.8	26.4	-2.4 +/- 1.5
26 to 50%	4,332	4,546	8,573	10,390	50.5	43.8	-6.8 +/- 2.3
51 to 75%	5,799	7,174	7,263	10,183	79.8	70.5	-9.4 +/- 4.6
76 to 99%	6,342	8,386	5,334	7,147	118.9	117.3	-1.6 +/- 6.4
100%	8,001	10,215	7,837	9,874	102.1	103.5	1.4 +/- 4.2

Sources: FY 2008 and 2009 SNAP Program Operations and SNAP QC data, and 2008, 2009 and 2010 CPS ASEC data.

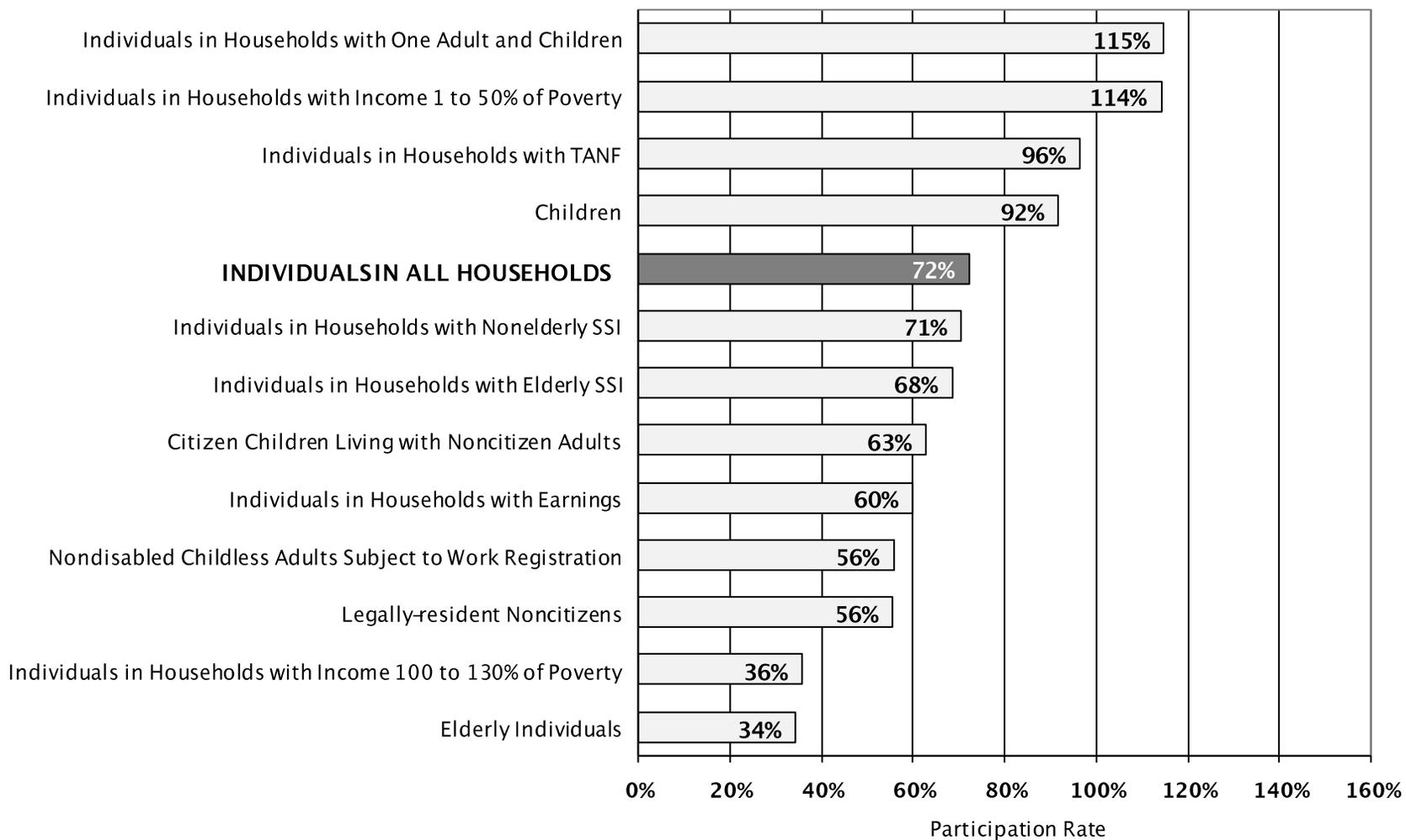
Notes: Participation rates over 100 percent are the result of discrepancies between the estimates of eligible and participating individuals and households, including the data from which they are estimated and differing treatment of some categorically eligible households. Participant and eligibility totals represent monthly averages. See Appendix D for more information.

<sup>a</sup> The estimates of participants in this report exclude certain participants and thus differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

<sup>b</sup> These income sources are not mutually exclusive.

<sup>c</sup> A small number of households received both elderly and nonelderly SSI income. The participation rate for households with any SSI is higher than rates for either SSI subgroup because the participation rate for the overlapping group is low.

**Figure 2. Individual Participation Rates by Subgroup, FY 2009**



Note: Participation rates over 100 percent are the result of discrepancies between the estimates of eligible and participating individuals and households, including the data from which they are estimated and differing treatment of some categorically eligible households. See Appendix D for more information.

**Table 5. SNAP Participation Rates by Selected Characteristics, FY 2002 to FY 2009**

	Participation Rates (%)							
	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009
Individuals in All Households	54.1	56.4	61.8	65.0	68.9	68.5	70.6	72.2
Households by Size								
Small (1 to 2 members)	44.4	46.3	50.6	53.6	57.9	57.9	61.3	64.3
Medium (3 to 4 members)	62.6	65.9	70.9	74.4	76.5	78.8	76.3	78.3
Large (5 or more members)	59.4	61.5	70.2	73.4	80.5	74.3	81.1	78.7
Age of Individual								
Children	70.5	74.3	80.2	86.3	88.6	87.0	88.3	91.7
Preschool Age (0 to 4 years)	75.3	78.3	83.9	90.9	90.6	89.2	89.3	94.6
School Age (5 to 17 years)	68.3	72.4	78.3	84.0	87.6	85.8	87.7	90.2
Nonelderly Adults (18 to 59 years)	50.5	53.0	59.2	61.0	66.2	67.1	69.3	70.8
Elderly Individuals	26.0	26.0	28.7	30.1	33.8	32.9	35.7	34.3
Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration	37.9	38.8	42.5	41.5	50.7	50.5	52.0	55.7
Noncitizens	28.7	28.9	42.0	42.9	48.6	48.5	50.2	55.6
Citizen Children Living with Noncitizen Adults	46.4	50.1	50.4	60.7	60.2	57.0	57.0	62.8
Individuals by Household Composition								
Households with Children	64.4	67.8	74.3	78.9	81.4	80.7	82.5	85.0
One Adult	90.7	91.0	100.7	105.3	107.8	108.0	110.3	114.8
Married Household Head	40.1	44.5	52.6	54.8	56.1	56.5	56.8	59.1
Other Multiple Adults	38.4	44.3	49.0	50.0	55.4	52.5	59.4	59.4
Households without Children	34.3	35.4	39.2	40.8	46.6	47.0	49.3	50.5
Individuals by Household Income Source								
Earnings	42.7	45.8	52.3	55.5	59.2	57.3	57.7	59.8
TANF	91.2	81.3	84.6	85.8	89.8	93.8	92.1	96.4
Elderly SSI	49.7	49.9	58.3	60.3	62.3	63.4	67.4	68.5
Nonelderly SSI	60.2	60.7	63.1	66.5	70.7	72.5	71.5	70.5
Individuals by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level								
No Income	50.6	55.9	58.7	65.9	69.2	70.1	74.9	70.8
1 to 50%	83.7	87.5	90.3	94.5	100.9	103.4	108.3	114.1
51 to 100%	63.1	64.4	73.3	77.3	79.9	80.1	78.3	83.1
101 to 130%	20.0	22.5	28.9	28.3	33.9	32.1	35.2	35.8
131%+	7.2	6.0	6.8	8.2	10.6	9.9	10.8	11.4
Individuals by Household Benefit as a Percentage of Maximum Benefit								
Minimum Benefit or Less	21.3	17.6	17.5	16.6	19.9	20.7	23.3	21.3
1 to 50%	31.6	32.6	36.4	36.9	39.9	39.0	39.1	36.8
51 to 99%	85.4	86.3	87.8	91.3	94.0	94.0	96.4	89.8
100%	65.3	68.4	79.1	85.4	95.8	96.2	102.1	103.5

Sources: SNAP Program Operations, SNAP QC, and CPS ASEC data for the years shown.

Note: Participation rates over 100 percent are the result of discrepancies between the estimates of eligible and participating individuals and households, including the data from which they are estimated and differing treatment of some categorically eligible households. See Appendix D for more information.

## REFERENCES

- Cody, Scott, and Carole Trippe. "Trends in FSP Participation Rates: Focus on August 1995." Alexandria, VA: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 1997.
- Cunyngham, Karen. "Trends in Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: 1994 to 2000." Alexandria, VA: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 2002.
- Leftin, Joshua. "Trends in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates: 2001 to 2008." Alexandria, VA: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 2010.
- Leftin, Joshua, Andrew Gothro, and Esa Eslami. "Characteristics in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Households: Fiscal Year 2009." Alexandria, VA: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 2010.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. "Food Stamp Program State Options Report, Eighth Edition." Washington, DC, June 2009.
- Wolkwitz, Kari. "Trends in Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: 2000 to 2006." Alexandria, VA: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 2008.

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

**APPENDIX A**

**SELECTED INDIVIDUAL AND HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATION RATES AND  
BENEFIT RECEIPT RATES IN FY 2009**

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

**Table A.1 Individual Participation Rates and Benefit Receipt Rates by Demographic Characteristics, Fiscal Year 2009**

	Individual Participation Rate (%)	Prorated Benefit Receipt Rate (%)
Age of Individual		
Children Under Age 18	91.69	103.68
Preschool	94.61	107.50
School-age	90.22	101.62
Adults Age 18 to 59	70.79	85.66
Elderly Age 60 and Over	34.34	49.92
Living Alone	51.75	82.03
Living with Others	17.83	22.96
Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration	55.73	65.24
Noncitizens	55.60	65.70
Citizen Children Living with Noncitizen Adults	62.77	74.86
Employment Status of Nonelderly Adults		
Employed	57.35	74.03
Not Employed	77.18	89.89
Gender of Individual		
Male	69.84	85.64
Female	74.09	91.04

Notes: Participation rates over 100 percent are the result of discrepancies between the estimates of eligible and participating individuals and households, including the data from which they are estimated and differing treatment of some categorically eligible households. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. We do not present FY 2009 participation rates for racial and ethnic subgroups because data on race and ethnicity for participating household heads are unreliable. See Appendix D for more information.

**Table A.2 Participation Rates and Benefit Receipt Rates by Household-Level Demographic and Economic Characteristics, Fiscal Year 2009**

	Household Participation Rate (%)	Benefit Receipt Rate (%)
All Households	72.23	90.91
Households with Children	89.49	99.68
Households with Elderly	35.77	44.44
Households with Disabled Nonelderly Adults	77.35	71.06
Households by Composition		
Households with Children	89.49	99.68
One Adult and Children	112.48	124.14
Married Household Head and Children	57.69	69.66
Other Multiple Adults and Children	61.75	71.82
Children Only	112.62	146.53
Households with No Children	60.68	73.43
Households by Income Sources		
Earnings	57.90	78.69
TANF	105.00	97.98
SSI	86.27	88.14
Households by Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level		
No Income	81.08	74.11
1 to 50%	115.88	119.04
51 to 100%	85.71	98.48
101 to 130%	28.88	45.67

Notes: Participation rates over 100 percent are the result of discrepancies between the estimates of eligible and participating individuals and households, including the data from which they are estimated and differing treatment of some categorically eligible households. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for more information.

**APPENDIX B**

**DETAILED PARTICIPATION RATES IN FY 2009**

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

**Table B.1. Individual and Household Participation Rates and Benefit Receipt Rates, Fiscal Year 2009**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals	32,145,656	44,512,089	72.22
SNAP Households	14,684,528	20,330,221	72.23
Benefits	4,040,194,552	4,443,998,354	90.91
Average SNAP Household Size	2.19		
Average Per Capita Benefit	125.68		

Notes: Participant and eligibility totals represent monthly averages. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

**Table B.2. Individual Participation Rates by Household Size, Fiscal Year 2009**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals by Household Size			
1 Person	6,871,542	9,368,027	73.35
2 People	5,708,786	10,198,032	55.98
3 People	6,763,365	8,673,177	77.98
4 People	5,947,523	7,563,309	78.64
5 People	3,636,813	4,567,573	79.62
6 or More People	3,217,627	4,141,970	77.68
Individuals in All Households	32,145,656	44,512,089	72.22

Notes: Participant and eligibility totals represent monthly averages. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

**Table B.3. Individual Participation Rates by Demographic Characteristics, Fiscal Year 2009**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals in All Households	32,145,656	44,512,089	72.22
Age of Individual			
Children Under Age 18	15,277,455	16,661,931	91.69
Preschool-age	5,281,314	5,581,964	94.61
School-age	9,996,141	11,079,967	90.22
Adults Age 18 to 59	14,184,775	20,036,967	70.79
Elderly Age 60 and Over	2,683,427	7,813,191	34.34
Living Alone	1,968,371	3,803,850	51.75
Living with Others	715,056	4,009,341	17.83
Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration	1,631,315	2,927,354	55.73
Noncitizens	1,246,985	2,242,595	55.60
Citizen Children Living with Noncitizen Adults	2,577,930	4,107,121	62.77
Employment Status of Nonelderly Adults			
Employed	3,701,559	6,454,727	57.35
Not Employed	10,483,215	13,582,241	77.18
Individuals by Household Composition			
Households with Children	23,809,174	27,998,757	85.04
One Adult	12,842,721	11,187,299	114.80
Married Household Head	5,698,650	9,636,254	59.14
Other Multiple Adults	3,292,925	5,547,614	59.36
Children Only	1,974,877	1,627,590	121.34
Households without Children	8,336,482	16,513,332	50.48
Gender of Individual			
Male	13,705,003	19,622,520	69.84
Female	18,440,653	24,889,569	74.09
Metropolitan Status			
Urban	25,237,139	36,139,909	69.83
Rural	6,908,517	8,372,179	82.52

Notes: Participant and eligibility totals represent monthly averages. Participation rates over 100 percent are the result of discrepancies between the estimates of eligible and participating individuals and households, including the data from which they are estimated and differing treatment of some categorically eligible households. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. We do not present FY 2009 participation rates for racial and ethnic subgroups because data on race and ethnicity for participating household heads are unreliable. See Appendix D for more information.

**Table B.4. Individual Participation Rates by Economic Characteristics of Households, Fiscal Year 2009**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals in All Households	32,145,656	44,512,089	72.22
Individuals by Household Income Sources			
No Earnings	19,642,273	23,615,421	83.18
Earnings	12,503,383	20,896,668	59.83
No TANF	11,562,157	19,375,381	59.67
TANF	941,226	1,521,286	61.87
TANF	4,337,242	4,500,711	96.37
Unemployment Compensation	1,868,815	1,420,600	131.55
Nonelderly or Elderly SSI Benefits <sup>a</sup>	6,198,819	8,669,240	71.50
Nonelderly SSI Benefits	4,724,572	6,701,338	70.50
Elderly SSI Benefits	1,537,902	2,245,744	68.48
Social Security	5,190,088	10,229,904	50.73
Individuals by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	28,160,920	31,647,268	88.98
No Income	4,508,455	6,371,408	70.76
1 to 50%	9,756,155	8,548,570	114.13
51 to 100%	13,896,310	16,727,290	83.08
Total Greater Than 100 % of Poverty	3,984,736	12,864,820	30.97
101 to 130%	3,695,347	10,330,696	35.77
131% or more	289,389	2,534,124	11.42
Individuals by Monthly Household Benefit			
Minimum benefit or less	530,760	2,491,428	21.30
Greater than the minimum to \$50	740,517	2,229,211	33.22
\$51 to \$100	1,433,608	3,238,439	44.27
\$101 to \$150	1,623,249	3,580,385	45.34
\$151 to \$200	4,981,508	5,972,553	83.41
\$201 to \$300	3,300,982	6,229,939	52.99
\$301 to \$400	5,974,769	7,376,652	81.00
\$401 or more	13,560,262	13,393,483	101.25
Benefit as a Percentage of Maximum Benefit			
Low Benefits (1 to 50%)	6,369,839	17,308,065	36.80
1 to 25%	1,823,818	6,918,079	26.36
26 to 50%	4,546,021	10,389,986	43.75
High Benefits (51 to 99%)	15,560,605	17,330,026	89.79
51 to 75%	7,174,174	10,183,335	70.45
76 to 99%	8,386,431	7,146,691	117.35
100%	10,215,212	9,873,998	103.46

Notes: Participant and eligibility totals represent monthly averages. Participation rates over 100 percent are the result of discrepancies between the estimates of eligible and participating individuals and households, including the data from which they are estimated and differing treatment of some categorically eligible households. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for more information.

<sup>a</sup> Households receiving nonelderly SSI income or elderly SSI income are not mutually exclusive.

**Table B.5A. Individual Participation Rates by Household Composition, Fiscal Year 2009—Households with Children**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals in Households with Children	23,809,174	27,998,757	85.04
Age of Individual			
Children Under Age 18	15,277,485	16,661,931	91.69
Adults Age 18 to 59	8,391,728	10,934,929	76.74
Elderly Age 60 and Over	139,961	401,897	34.83
Individuals by Household Income Sources			
No Income	2,713,043	3,938,584	68.88
No Earnings	12,430,509	11,416,059	108.89
Earnings	11,378,665	16,582,698	68.62
TANF	4,278,473	4,458,412	95.96
Earnings	933,934	1,505,660	62.03
No Earnings	3,344,539	2,952,753	113.27
No TANF	19,530,701	23,540,344	82.97
Earnings	10,444,731	15,077,039	69.28
No Earnings	9,085,970	8,463,306	107.36
Social Security	2,191,589	2,771,565	79.07
Individuals by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	20,962,465	21,235,649	98.71
No Income	2,713,043	3,938,584	68.88
1 to 50%	8,666,986	7,136,212	121.45
51 to 100%	9,582,436	10,160,854	94.31
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	2,846,709	6,763,108	42.09
101 to 130%	2,747,249	6,328,026	43.41
131% or more	99,460	435,081	22.86
Individuals by Household Earnings as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	22,253,207	22,902,582	97.16
No Earnings	12,460,416	11,416,059	109.15
1 to 50%	4,050,281	3,500,288	115.71
51 to 100%	5,742,510	7,986,235	71.91
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	1,555,967	5,096,175	30.53
101 to 130%	1,538,164	4,887,442	31.47
131% or more	17,804	208,733	8.53

Notes: Participant and eligibility totals represent monthly averages. Participation rates over 100 percent are the result of discrepancies between the estimates of eligible and participating individuals and households, including the data from which they are estimated and differing treatment of some categorically eligible households. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for more information.

**Table B.5B. Individual Participation Rates by Household Composition, Fiscal Year 2009—Households with One Adult and Children**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals in Households with One Adult and Children	12,842,721	11,187,299	114.80
Age of Individual			
Children Under Age 18	8,569,820	7,305,350	117.31
Adults Age 18 to 59	4,209,197	3,786,917	111.15
Elderly Age 60 and Over	63,073	95,032	66.37
Individuals by Household Income Sources			
No Income	1,805,121	2,136,902	84.47
No Earnings	7,871,202	6,208,568	126.78
Earnings	4,971,520	4,978,730	99.86
TANF	2,549,895	2,458,856	103.70
Earnings	401,309	426,199	94.16
No Earnings	2,148,585	2,032,657	105.70
No TANF	10,292,827	8,728,443	117.92
Earnings	4,570,210	4,552,531	100.39
No Earnings	5,722,616	4,175,912	137.04
Social Security	1,151,193	1,007,763	114.23
Individuals by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	11,533,618	9,196,620	125.41
No Income	1,805,121	2,136,902	84.47
1 to 50%	5,026,852	3,712,138	135.42
51 to 100%	4,701,645	3,347,580	140.45
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	1,309,103	1,990,679	65.76
101 to 130%	1,246,488	1,883,970	66.16
131% or more	62,615	106,709	58.68
Individuals by Household Earnings as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	12,173,714	9,681,215	125.75
No Earnings	7,875,153	6,208,568	126.84
1 to 50%	1,726,631	1,102,845	156.56
51 to 100%	2,571,931	2,369,802	108.53
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	669,007	1,506,083	44.42
101 to 130%	658,354	1,428,481	46.09
131% or more	10,653	77,603	13.73

Notes: Participant and eligibility totals represent monthly averages. Participation rates over 100 percent are the result of discrepancies between the estimates of eligible and participating individuals and households, including the data from which they are estimated and differing treatment of some categorically eligible households. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for more information.

**Table B.5C. Individual Participation Rates by Household Composition, Fiscal Year 2009—Households with Married Household Head and Children**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals in Households with Married Household Head and Children	5,698,650	9,636,254	59.14
Age of Individual			
Children Under Age 18	3,145,603	5,204,983	60.43
Adults Age 18 to 59	2,509,227	4,257,677	58.93
Elderly Age 60 and Over	43,820	173,593	25.24
Individuals by Household Income Sources			
No Income	477,513	990,169	48.23
No Earnings	2,192,723	2,636,115	83.18
Earnings	3,505,927	7,000,139	50.08
TANF	670,241	752,456	89.07
Earnings	206,433	380,461	54.26
No Earnings	463,808	371,995	124.68
No TANF	5,028,409	8,883,797	56.60
Earnings	3,299,494	6,619,678	49.84
No Earnings	1,728,915	2,264,120	76.36
Social Security	535,198	791,471	67.62
Individuals by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	4,707,318	6,608,411	71.23
No Income	477,513	990,169	48.23
1 to 50%	1,592,721	1,714,627	92.89
51 to 100%	2,637,084	3,903,615	67.55
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	991,331	3,027,843	32.74
101 to 130%	977,787	2,821,669	34.65
131% or more	13,544	206,174	6.57
Individuals by Household Earnings as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	5,058,506	7,227,117	69.99
No Earnings	2,208,190	2,636,115	83.77
1 to 50%	1,061,669	1,252,138	84.79
51 to 100%	1,788,648	3,338,864	53.57
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	640,143	2,409,137	26.57
101 to 130%	635,143	2,312,949	27.46
131% or more	5,000	96,189	5.20

Notes: Participant and eligibility totals represent monthly averages. Participation rates over 100 percent are the result of discrepancies between the estimates of eligible and participating individuals and households, including the data from which they are estimated and differing treatment of some categorically eligible households. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for more information.

**Table B.5D. Individual Participation Rates by Household Composition, Fiscal Year 2009—Households with Other Multiple Adults and Children**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals in Households with Other Multiple Adults and Children	3,292,925	5,547,614	59.36
Age of Individual			
Children Under Age 18	1,586,780	2,524,008	62.87
Adults Age 18 to 59	1,673,081	2,890,335	57.89
Elderly Age 60 and Over	33,065	133,271	24.81
Individuals by Household Income Sources			
No Income	233,244	411,114	56.73
No Earnings	1,561,496	2,068,483	75.49
Earnings	1,731,429	3,479,131	49.77
TANF	583,876	1,247,100	46.82
Earnings	172,047	698,999	24.61
No Earnings	411,829	548,101	75.14
No TANF	2,709,049	4,300,514	62.99
Earnings	1,559,382	2,780,132	56.09
No Earnings	1,149,667	1,520,382	75.62
Social Security	467,649	967,641	48.33
Individuals by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	2,844,548	4,052,771	70.19
No Income	233,244	411,114	56.73
1 to 50%	1,119,583	1,356,759	82.52
51 to 100%	1,491,721	2,284,897	65.29
Total Greater Than 100 % of Poverty	448,377	1,494,844	29.99
101 to 130%	429,732	1,376,818	31.21
131% or more	18,645	118,025	15.80
Individuals by Household Earnings as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	3,111,376	4,584,421	67.87
No Earnings	1,564,754	2,068,483	75.65
1 to 50%	683,491	852,802	80.15
51 to 100%	863,131	1,663,136	51.90
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	181,550	963,194	18.85
101 to 130%	179,462	930,332	19.29
131% or more	2,088	32,861	6.35

Notes: Participant and eligibility totals represent monthly averages. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for more information.

**Table B.5E. Individual Participation Rates by Household Composition, Fiscal Year 2009—Households with No Children**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals in Households with No Children	8,336,482	16,513,332	50.48
Age of Individual			
Children Under Age 18	0	0	0.00
Adults Age 18 to 59	5,793,031	9,102,038	63.65
Elderly Age 60 and Over	2,543,451	7,411,294	34.32
Individuals by Household Income Sources			
No Income	1,795,413	2,432,824	73.80
No Earnings	7,211,764	12,199,362	59.12
Earnings	1,124,718	4,313,970	26.07
TANF	58,768	42,299	138.94
Earnings	7,292	15,627	46.66
No Earnings	51,476	26,672	193.00
No TANF	8,277,714	16,471,033	50.26
Earnings	1,117,426	4,298,343	26.00
No Earnings	7,160,288	12,172,690	58.82
Social Security	2,998,498	7,458,339	40.20
Individuals by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	7,198,455	10,411,619	69.14
No Income	1,795,413	2,432,824	73.80
1 to 50%	1,089,169	1,412,358	77.12
51 to 100%	4,313,874	6,566,437	65.70
Total Greater Than 100 % of Poverty	1,138,027	6,101,713	18.65
101 to 130%	948,098	4,002,669	23.69
131% or more	189,929	2,099,043	9.05
Individuals by Household Earnings as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	8,167,882	14,841,005	55.04
No Earnings	7,213,932	12,199,362	59.13
1 to 50%	533,082	872,829	61.08
51 to 100%	420,867	1,768,813	23.79
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	168,600	1,672,327	10.08
101 to 130%	157,599	1,244,929	12.66
131% or more	11,001	427,398	2.57

Notes: Participant and eligibility totals represent monthly averages. Participation rates over 100 percent are the result of discrepancies between the estimates of eligible and participating individuals and households, including the data from which they are estimated and differing treatment of some categorically eligible households. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for more information.

**Table B.6. Participation Rates for Individuals in Households Without any Noncitizens or Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration, Fiscal Year 2009**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals in Households Without Any Noncitizens or Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work	27,817,568	36,046,453	77.17
Age of Individual			
Children Under Age 18	13,990,369	14,359,729	97.43
Adults Age 18 to 59	11,546,337	14,510,524	79.57
Elderly Age 60 and Over	2,280,862	7,176,201	31.78
Individuals by Household Composition			
One Adult and Children	12,268,461	10,358,333	118.44
Married Household Head and Children	4,531,636	7,337,087	61.76
No Children	6,230,475	11,793,288	52.83
Individuals by Household Income Sources			
Earnings	10,758,971	16,025,051	67.14
No Earnings	17,058,597	20,021,403	85.20
TANF	3,973,381	4,228,519	93.97
Individuals by Household Benefit as a Percentage of Maximum Benefit			
1 to 50%	5,714,138	14,615,607	39.10
51 to 99%	13,648,960	13,988,800	97.57

Notes: Participant and eligibility totals represent monthly averages. Participation rates over 100 percent are the result of discrepancies between the estimates of eligible and participating individuals and households, including the data from which they are estimated and differing treatment of some categorically eligible households. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for more information.

**Table B.7. Household Participation Rates, Fiscal Year 2009**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Households with Children	7,294,312	8,151,300	89.49
Households with Elderly	2,439,858	6,820,737	35.77
Households with Disabled Nonelderly Adults	3,122,837	4,037,114	77.35
Households by Composition			
Households with Children	7,294,312	8,151,300	89.49
One Adult and Children	4,272,270	3,798,300	112.48
Married Household Head and Children	1,283,680	2,225,043	57.69
Other Multiple Adults and Children	798,920	1,293,759	61.75
Children Only	939,442	834,198	112.62
Households with No Children	7,390,216	12,178,920	60.68
Households by Income Source			
Earnings	4,219,451	7,287,029	57.90
TANF	1,409,723	1,342,532	105.00
SSI	3,523,665	4,084,404	86.27
Households with Noncitizens	860,268	1,562,202	55.07
Households with Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration	1,471,793	2,367,780	62.16
Households by Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
No Income	2,633,001	3,247,518	81.08
1 to 50%	3,618,922	3,122,947	115.88
51 to 100%	6,637,812	7,744,481	85.71
101% or more	1,794,792	6,215,274	28.88

Notes: Participant and eligibility totals represent monthly averages. Participation rates over 100 percent are the result of discrepancies between the estimates of eligible and participating individuals and households, including the data from which they are estimated and differing treatment of some categorically eligible households. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for more information.

**Table B.8. Benefit Receipt Rates by Household-Level Demographic and Economic Characteristics, Fiscal Year 2009**

	Benefits Received by Participating Households (QC)	Potential Benefits to Eligible Households (CPS)	Benefit Receipt Rate (Percent)
Benefits for All Households	4,040,194,552	4,443,998,354	90.91
Benefits for Households with Children	2,950,280,878	2,959,760,858	99.68
Benefits for Households with Elderly	315,593,485	710,134,054	44.44
Benefits for Households with Disabled Nonelderly Adults	621,911,873	875,136,024	71.06
<b>Benefits by Household Composition</b>			
Households with Children	2,950,280,878	2,959,760,858	99.68
One Adult	1,657,123,227	1,334,889,825	124.14
Married Household Head	631,976,093	907,220,480	69.66
Other Multiple Adults	375,314,031	522,562,326	71.82
Children Only	285,867,527	195,088,227	146.53
Households without Children	1,089,913,674	1,484,237,496	73.43
<b>Benefits by Household Income Sources</b>			
No Earnings	2,625,102,912	2,645,797,461	99.22
Earnings	1,415,091,639	1,798,200,893	78.69
TANF	568,496,384	580,226,662	97.98
Unemployment Compensation	185,957,897	87,145,955	213.39
SSI	651,366,075	738,980,434	88.14
Social Security	498,652,314	712,742,154	69.96
<b>Benefits by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level</b>			
No Income	779,425,999	1,051,773,757	74.11
1 to 50%	1,485,873,042	1,248,203,188	119.04
51 to 100%	1,512,429,540	1,535,708,176	98.48
101 to 130%	246,942,863	540,655,531	45.67
131% or more	15,523,107	67,657,701	22.94
<b>Benefits by Monthly Household Benefit</b>			
Minimum benefit or less	7,294,431	32,830,950	22.22
Greater than the minimum to \$50	22,761,171	60,190,367	37.82
\$51 to \$100	90,650,321	174,365,787	51.99
\$101 to \$150	149,981,854	264,609,360	56.68
\$151 to \$200	795,371,508	739,606,972	107.54
\$201 to \$300	312,312,993	526,936,077	59.27
\$301 to \$400	802,037,516	892,892,346	89.82
\$401 or more	1,859,784,757	1,752,566,495	106.12
<b>Household Benefits as a Percentage of Maximum Benefit</b>			
1 to 25%	47,081,996	159,710,346	29.48
26 to 50%	294,786,567	642,219,896	45.90
51 to 75%	746,241,799	1,020,401,754	73.13
76 to 99%	1,201,807,142	993,772,539	120.93
100%	1,750,277,047	1,627,893,818	107.52

Notes: Benefit and potential benefit totals represent monthly averages. Total potential benefits to eligible households in this table do not exactly match prorated potential benefits to eligible individuals in Table B.9 because of differences between household weights and the sum of individual weights in the CPS ASEC. Participation rates over 100 percent are the result of discrepancies between the estimates of eligible and participating individuals and households, including the data from which they are estimated and differing treatment of some categorically eligible households. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for more information.

**Table B.9. Benefit Receipt Rates by Individual-Level Demographic Characteristics, Fiscal Year 2009**

	Prorated Benefits Received by Participating Individuals (QC)	Prorated Potential Benefits to Eligible Individuals (CPS)	Benefit Receipt Rate (Percent)
Benefits for All Individuals	4,040,194,552	4,558,284,072	88.63
Benefits by Age of Individual			
Children Under Age 18	1,905,537,059	1,837,979,031	103.68
Preschool-age	690,296,395	642,158,537	107.50
School-age	1,215,240,664	1,195,820,494	101.62
Adults Age 18 to 59	1,861,547,205	2,173,204,325	85.66
Elderly Age 60 and Over	273,110,287	547,100,717	49.92
Living Alone	204,817,151	249,677,669	82.03
Living with Others	68,293,136	297,423,048	22.96
Benefits for Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration	265,456,490	406,895,226	65.24
Benefits for Noncitizens	159,364,825	242,571,696	65.70
Benefits for Citizen Children Living with Noncitizen Adults	344,593,561	460,324,817	74.86
Benefits by Gender of Individual			
Male	1,736,075,701	2,027,262,798	85.64
Female	2,304,118,851	2,531,021,276	91.04
Benefits by Employment Status of Nonelderly Adults			
Employed	428,997,836	579,511,035	74.03
Not Employed	1,432,549,369	1,593,693,290	89.89

Notes: Prorated benefit totals represent monthly averages. An individual's prorated benefits are calculated by dividing the household benefit by the number of people in the household. Benefit receipt rates by individual-level characteristics are calculated by summing the prorated benefits of individuals with the selected characteristic. Prorated potential benefits to eligible households in Table B.8 do not exactly match potential benefits to eligible individuals in this table because of differences between household weights and the sum of individual weights in the CPS ASEC. Receipt rates over 100 percent are due to differences between the CPS-based estimates and SNAP QC data. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. We do not present FY 2009 participation rates for racial and ethnic subgroups because data on race and ethnicity for participating household heads are unreliable. See Appendix D for more information.

**APPENDIX C**

**CHANGE IN INDIVIDUAL SNAP PARTICIPATION RATES, 1988 TO 2009**

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

Table C.1. Change in Individual SNAP Participation Rates, 1988 to 2009

Time Period	Change in Participation Rate	Change in Participants	Change in Eligible Individuals
1988-1990	6.1 points	11.1%	-1.4%
1990-1991	2.8 points	14.6%	8.9%
1991-1992	2.3 points	10.3%	6.1%
1992-1993	1.0 points	5.8%	4.1%
1993-1994 <sup>a</sup>	1.1 points	-0.2%	-2.0%
1994-1995 <sup>a</sup>	-2.1 points	-3.9%	-1.1%
1995-1996	-3.5 points	-5.3%	-0.5%
1996-1997	-5.2 points	-14.7%	-7.7%
1997-1998	-4.2 points	-10.9%	-4.6%
1998-1999 <sup>b</sup>	-1.9 points	-5.9%	-2.8%
1999-2000 <sup>b</sup>	-0.7 points	-5.7%	-4.5%
2000-2001	-2.8 points	0.8%	6.0%
2001-2002(a) <sup>c</sup>	-0.1 points	9.9%	10.1%
2002(b)-2003 <sup>c</sup>	2.4 points	11.4%	6.7%
2003-2004	5.4 points	12.2%	2.4%
2004-2005	3.1 points	6.1%	1.1%
2005-2006	4.0 points	2.6%	-3.4%
2006-2007	-0.4 points	1.3%	1.9%
2007-2008	2.1 points	6.9%	3.8%
2008-2009	1.6 points	18.1%	15.4%

Sources: SNAP Program Operations data, SNAP QC data, and CPS ASEC data for the years shown.

<sup>a</sup>There are two estimates for 1994, due to revised methodologies for determining SNAP eligibility and the number of participants. The original estimate is used for the change between 1993 and 1994; the revised estimate is used for the change between 1994 and 1995.

<sup>b</sup>There are two estimates for 1999, due to reweighting of the 2000 through 2003 CPS ASEC files to Census 2000 by the Census Bureau and revised methodologies for determining SNAP eligibility. The original estimate is used for the change between 1998 and 1999; the revised estimate is used for the change between 1999 and 2000.

<sup>c</sup>There are two estimates for 2002, due to revised methodologies for determining SNAP eligibility and the number of participants. The original estimate (2002(a)) is used for the change between 2001 and 2002; the revised estimate (2002(b)) is used for the change between 2002 and 2003.

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

**APPENDIX D**  
**METHODOLOGY**

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

## METHODOLOGY

The participation rates reported here are based on estimates of individuals eligible for and participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The estimates of eligible individuals are derived from a microsimulation model that uses data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC), which provides income and program participation information for the previous calendar year, as well as detailed information on program rules from the fiscal year to simulate eligibility for SNAP.

We obtain data from two combined years of the CPS ASEC to create a fiscal year data file that aligns to the fiscal year program rules. Thus, for fiscal year (FY) 2009 we based estimates of eligible individuals on data from the 2009 CPS ASEC (covering October through December 2008), the 2010 CPS ASEC (covering January through September 2009), and program rules from FY 2009 (covering October 2008 through September 2009). We derived estimates for previous years using the two CPS ASEC files appropriate for each of those years.

The estimates of participants are based on SNAP Statistical Summary of Operations (Program Operations) data and SNAP Quality Control (SNAP QC) data<sup>1</sup> for the fiscal year. Thus, for estimates of SNAP participants in FY 2009, the Program Operations and SNAP QC data cover October 2008 through September 2009. The resulting participation rates estimate the percentage of individuals eligible for SNAP that choose to participate in the program.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> In reports for years prior to 2007, we referred to these data as FSP Quality Control (FSPQC) data.

<sup>2</sup> In an average month in FY 2009, about 95,000 individuals participated in the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR). Many of these individuals were income- and asset-eligible for SNAP, but FDPIR participants are not eligible to also participate in SNAP. However, because the number of individuals participating in the FDPIR can be estimated only with substantial sampling and nonsampling error, we included them in the number of SNAP-eligible individuals in this report. Because we included FDPIR participants in estimates of SNAP eligibles but not in estimates of SNAP participants, participation rates are slightly underestimated. Specifically, if we removed 95,000 individuals from the number eligible for SNAP, the participation rate would have increased by less than 0.2 percentage points. However, the degree to which participation rates are underestimated is less because it is likely that not all FDPIR participants are SNAP-eligible.

In this appendix, we describe the methodologies we used to estimate the number of individuals eligible for and participating in SNAP. Data and methodological improvements implemented for this year's report, and described in more detail in this appendix, include:

- A fiscal year eligibility file (Section A)
- An improved SNAP household formation methodology in the eligibility file (Section A.1)
- SSI and TANF simulations in the eligibility file (Section A.3)
- An enhanced net income imputation in the eligibility file (Section A.5)
- An enhanced asset-eligibility imputation in the eligibility file (Section A.6)
- Reweighted FY 2002 through FY 2004 SNAP QC data files that are consistent with the more recent data files (Section B)
- Corrected SNAP Program Operations data from Missouri for FY 2003 through FY 2008 (Section B)
- Coding changes to correct for overreporting of TANF receipt in California in the SNAP QC data (Section B)

All of the improvements were implemented in the 2009 file and for prior years, so the participation rates presented in this report for FY 2002 through FY 2009 are consistent methodologically. As a result, estimates for FY 2002 through FY 2008 presented in this report are not consistent with estimates presented in Leftin (2010) and earlier reports.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to the enhancements listed above, we updated SNAP eligibility parameters and rules to estimate the number of SNAP-eligible individuals in FY 2009. Specifically, we:

- Updated the SNAP gross income screen, net income screen, standard deduction amounts, and maximum benefit amounts to reflect FY 2009 regulations
- Updated the regression equation used to estimate SNAP net income, using the FY 2009 SNAP QC data

---

<sup>3</sup> We present consistent rates for FY 1999 through FY 2002 in Wolkwitz (2008), consistent rates for September 1994 through September 1999 in Cunyningham (2002), and consistent rates for September 1976 through August 1994 in Cody and Trippe (1997).

- Averaged the results from two new sets of asset equations simulating vehicle rules in place in the first and second halves of FY 2009
- Updated the percentage of nonelderly, nondisabled childless adults qualified to receive SNAP benefits and the estimated percentage of noncitizens who are refugees

In the remainder of this appendix, we describe the methodology used to calculate the participation rates. Tables D.1 through D.6 show the updated eligibility parameters and other information used to update the participation rates.

## **A. Determining SNAP-Eligible Individuals**

The CPS ASEC provides income and program participation information for the previous calendar year.<sup>4</sup> We estimate the number of SNAP-eligible individuals with a microsimulation model that uses two combined years of CPS ASEC data to simulate SNAP eligibility in an average month within the fiscal year. Although the model does not capture data specific to a particular month, we impute monthly income for 12 individual months. Specifically, we simulate the number of months in which households typically receive various types of income, as well as the monthly employment status for each individual who reports either earnings or being unemployed. We allocate these months throughout the fiscal year, such that the trends in total simulated monthly employment and unemployment follow the corresponding trends found in the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) monthly totals. We average the results from all 12 monthly simulations to produce an average monthly estimate for the fiscal year.

We ran two sets of 12 simulations in FY 2009 to capture midyear federal and State SNAP rule changes. The first set reflects rules in place during the first half of the fiscal year (October 2008 through March 2009), and the second set reflects those in place during the second half (April 2009 through September 2009). Specifically, the first set of simulations modeled federal maximum and

---

<sup>4</sup> A summary of changes in the CPS ASEC over time is presented in Appendix G.

minimum allotment amounts that were in effect before the implementation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) on April 1, 2009. It also captured pre-ARRA requirements for nonelderly, nondisabled childless adults subject to work requirements<sup>5</sup> and State vehicle rules in place in March 2009. The second set of simulations modeled the increases in maximum and minimum allotments that took place as a result of ARRA and State vehicle rules in place in September 2009.<sup>6</sup> We averaged the results of the two sets of simulations to model the fiscal year.

In the simulation procedure, we applied SNAP eligibility guidelines in effect in FY 2009 to each household in the CPS ASEC. The SNAP guidelines include household formation rules, asset limits, and income limits. Because several types of information needed to determine SNAP eligibility are missing from the CPS ASEC data, we imputed some information to improve the model estimates of eligible households. This estimation procedure is explained below.

## **1. Simulating the Composition of the SNAP Household**

Rules regarding the composition of the SNAP household (individuals who must apply for SNAP together) are based on shared living quarters and purchasing and preparing food together. While the CPS ASEC defines dwelling units according to shared living quarters, it does not identify who purchases and prepares food together. Therefore, we simulate the formation of SNAP households within each CPS ASEC dwelling unit. In most cases, we simulate all members of the dwelling unit as being in the same SNAP household. However, for the relatively small percentage of dwelling units with multiple families or unrelated individuals, we simulate two or more groups of people to form separate SNAP households.

---

<sup>5</sup> These rules are described in more detail in Section A.2b.

<sup>6</sup> The two sets of allotment amounts are presented in Tables D.3A and D.3B.

We implemented modifications to our SNAP household formation methodology for this year's report to take advantage of related data in the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). Specifically, for dwelling units with certain characteristics, we now impute SNAP household formation according to patterns observed in our SIPP-based microsimulation model.

We also use the following rules to identify SNAP households:

- We exclude ineligible noncitizens and nonelderly, nondisabled childless adults subject to work registration.<sup>7</sup>
- We exclude simulated SSI recipients who are not eligible for SNAP because they receive cash instead of SNAP benefits in SSI cashout States (currently only California).
- We exclude all individuals who are living in group quarters, are full-time post-secondary students, or are living in households headed by a member of the Armed Forces.<sup>8</sup>

## **2. Identifying Eligible Noncitizens and Nonelderly, Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration**

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) made most noncitizens ineligible and required many nonelderly, nondisabled childless adults either to work or face time limits on benefit receipt. However, many noncitizens had eligibility restored by the Agricultural Research, Extension and Education Reform Act (AREERA) of 1998 and the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Farm Security Act), while some nonelderly, nondisabled childless adults remained eligible through waivers, exemptions, or by meeting the work requirements. Furthermore, effective April 1, 2009, ARRA allowed States to suspend time limits on benefits through September 2010 for those nonelderly, nondisabled childless adults who had previously been subject to the time limit. Because the CPS does not track all of the information

---

<sup>7</sup> No nonelderly, nondisabled childless adults subject to work registration were excluded beginning on April 1, 2009, because ARRA allowed States to suspend time limits on benefits for these adults.

<sup>8</sup> Full-time post-secondary students are defined as nonelderly, nondisabled adults age 18 and 49 without TANF income and without children under age 6. Married individuals with children under age 12, and individuals working 20 hours per week or more are also not considered full-time post-secondary students.

needed to identify which noncitizens and nonelderly, nondisabled childless adults are categorically ineligible for SNAP, we make assumptions (detailed below) about how many and which of these individuals remain eligible. To retain sample size, we implement our eligibility assumptions for these populations through weighting adjustments.<sup>9</sup>

#### **a. Identifying Eligible Noncitizens**

In FY 2009, the following legal resident noncitizens were eligible for SNAP:

- Noncitizens who had lived legally in the United States for more than five years (effective April 2003)
- Noncitizens who were receiving disability benefits, regardless of date of entry (effective October 2002)
- Noncitizens legally living in the United States who were under age 18, regardless of date of entry (effective October 2003)
- Noncitizens who were admitted as refugees or granted asylum or a stay of deportation (eligible for seven years after arrival)<sup>10</sup>
- Other groups of noncitizens, such as lawful permanent residents with a military connection<sup>11</sup>

Sponsors of noncitizens who arrived in the United States after 1997 are required to sign a legally enforceable affidavit pledging to support the noncitizen financially for at least 10 years. If the noncitizen applies for SNAP benefits within that 10-year period, and the sponsor has income or

---

<sup>9</sup> The weighting adjustments reflect the probability that a household of a certain composition is eligible for SNAP. For example, if a household has one noncitizen, we duplicate the record for that household. In the first copy of the record, we retain the noncitizen and multiply the household weight by the probability that the noncitizen is eligible for SNAP benefits. In the second copy, we exclude the noncitizen and multiply the household weight by the probability that the noncitizen is ineligible.

<sup>10</sup> The status of refugees typically changes to Legal Permanent Resident one year after arrival. After five years of residency, both refugees and those granted asylum are eligible under the five-year residency provision.

<sup>11</sup> PRWORA exempts members of the U.S. Armed Forces, veterans, and dependents of service members and veterans from the five-year residency requirements. Other legal noncitizens may qualify for benefits without meeting the five-year residency requirements by attaining 40 qualifying quarters of work, including work attained by the applicant's spouse or parents (if the work was attained when the applicant was married to the spouse or a minor child of the parent). However, almost all of the individuals meeting the work requirement would have also met the five-year residency requirement.

assets that the noncitizen does not report and would change the noncitizen's SNAP benefit level or eligibility status, the State can sue the nonindigent sponsor to recoup the cost of benefits issued to the sponsored noncitizen. This provision does not apply to immigrants without individual sponsors, including those admitted as refugees or granted asylum, and those sponsored by an institution or an employer. The provision also does not impact those sponsored by close family members living in the same household, such as spouses, because SNAP rules automatically deem such income.

The CPS ASEC distinguishes between citizens and noncitizens. It also includes information on noncitizens' age and year of arrival to the United States, which we use to identify noncitizens who potentially are eligible for SNAP. These include qualified noncitizens who have been in the country for at least five years, are under age 18, or are receiving disability benefits.

The CPS ASEC does not include certain details on noncitizens, such as whether a noncitizen was admitted as a refugee. To simulate eligibility rules for refugees, we randomly assign refugee status by year of entry according to estimates derived from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services data. In our FY 2009 eligibility determination, we assumed that 10 percent of noncitizens who entered the United States in 2004 or 2005, 8 percent who entered in 2006 or 2007, and 11 percent who entered in 2008 or 2009 were admitted as refugees.

The CPS ASEC also does not include data on whether a noncitizen is lawfully in the United States. To simulate some noncitizens as undocumented and thus ineligible for SNAP, we randomly assign undocumented immigrant status according to estimates of the number of undocumented immigrants in the CPS ASEC by State.<sup>12</sup>

As a result of the more stringent sponsor deeming provisions implemented in 1997, some apparently eligible noncitizens are subject to deeming of their sponsors' income and assets and so

---

<sup>12</sup> We use Dr. Jeffrey Passel's unpublished estimates, prepared for the Pew Hispanic Center, of the number of unauthorized migrants included in the CPS ASEC supplements for 1995 to 1996 and 1998 to 2009. For the FY 2009 eligibility estimates, we used Passel's estimates of unauthorized migrants for FY 2007 through FY 2009.

are likely either not to be eligible or to choose to remove themselves from the SNAP household to avoid negative repercussions to their sponsors. To simulate this, we randomly assign 26.4 percent of noncitizens arriving after December 1997 as subject to deeming from a sponsor. We use data from the New Immigrant Survey to estimate the appropriate percentage of documented non-refugee noncitizens who have been in the country between 5 and 10 years, are required to have one or more sponsors who sign an affidavit of support, and who live in a household separate from at least one sponsor.

We exclude from the SNAP household noncitizens who do not meet the eligibility requirements, are undocumented, or are subject to deeming. We assign a prorated portion of excluded noncitizens' income to the SNAP household and include their assets in the SNAP household's countable assets.

**b. Identifying Nonelderly Nondisabled Adults Without Dependents Subject to Work Registration**

Referred to as ABAWDs in past reports, these individuals are ages 18 to 49, not disabled, not living with children under age 18, and subject to work registration. With some exceptions, these individuals needed to meet work requirements to participate in SNAP prior to April 1, 2009. If they failed to meet the requirements, they were limited to three months of benefit receipt in any 36-month period. They could be exempt from these requirements if they lived in an area with high unemployment or insufficient jobs (waiver area), participated in an employment and training program, or were covered by their State's 15-percent exemption. ARRA (PL 111-5) allowed States to suspend the time limits on benefits for those not meeting work requirements, effective April 2009 through September 2010.

We identify nonelderly, nondisabled childless adults subject to work registration by looking at basic demographic characteristics in the CPS ASEC.<sup>13</sup> Because we cannot determine from the CPS ASEC which of these individuals remain eligible for SNAP, we impute this information. We estimate the proportion that has not reached the time limit (based on data from the SIPP) and the proportion eligible due to residence in a waiver area, participation in an employment and training program, or receipt of the 15-percent exemption using federal and State administrative data.<sup>14</sup> These proportions, as well as the total percentage of nondisabled nonelderly childless adults subject to work registration who are eligible for SNAP, are presented in Table D.1. Because ARRA provided for the removal of time-limited benefits starting on April 1, 2009, we modeled all nonelderly, nondisabled childless adults subject to work requirements as living in waived areas during the second half of the fiscal year (April 2009 through September 2009.)

Nonelderly, nondisabled childless adults who are not eligible are excluded from the SNAP household and, as with noncitizens, have a prorated portion of their incomes assigned to the SNAP household and their assets considered when we determine the household's eligibility.

### **3. Simulating SSI and TANF Receipt**

In prior reports, we used reported information in the CPS ASEC to identify individuals receiving SSI (in States other than California) and TANF. However, these types of income are underreported in the CPS ASEC. For the participation rates presented in this report, we simulate SSI and TANF receipt. We simulate SSI eligibility and benefit rules in place during the fiscal year and calibrate SSI receipt to administrative totals in the Social Security Administration (SSA) statistical report for the appropriate file year (FY 2002 through FY 2009). We simulate State TANF

---

<sup>13</sup> The population of nonelderly, nondisabled childless adults subject to work registration includes some eligible noncitizens.

<sup>14</sup> We estimate the proportion that has received no more than three months of benefits while not working, using separate estimates for current participants and nonparticipants.

eligibility and benefit rules in place during the fiscal year. We calibrate TANF receipt to administrative totals in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) data files for 2002 through 2008.<sup>15</sup> We adjust the weights on the ACF data sets to make our estimate of TANF households with SNAP in the ACF consistent with the number of SNAP households with TANF in the SNAP QC data file.

#### **4. Categorically Eligible SNAP Households**

Certain SNAP households are categorically eligible for SNAP and therefore not subject to income or asset limits. A household is categorically eligible if all of its members receive SSI, cash or in-kind TANF benefits or, in some places, General Assistance (GA). A broader interpretation of categorical eligibility rules implemented on November 21, 2000 requires States to confer categorical eligibility on families receiving benefits or services at least 50 percent funded by TANF or Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds. States have the option of conferring categorical eligibility on families receiving benefits or services less than 50 percent funded by TANF/MOE. They also may confer categorical eligibility on households in which one member receives the benefit or service when the State determines that the whole household benefits.

Many States have very broad programs that provide a simple service—a TANF/MOE-funded brochure on domestic violence, for example—to confer categorical eligibility on a large number of households. These policies are known as broad-based categorical eligibility (BBCE) policies. The number of States implementing BBCE policies has expanded rapidly in recent years, rising from 15 States in FY 2008 to 27 States in FY 2009 and 40 States (including the District of Columbia but excluding Guam and the Virgin Islands) as of March 2011. Most States with BBCE policies have implemented gross income limits between 130 and 200 percent of the SNAP poverty guidelines to

---

<sup>15</sup> ACF totals for 2009 were not yet available when we ran our TANF simulation for the 2009 eligibility file, so we used data from 2008 for that file.

qualify for the TANF/MOE-funded noncash benefit and have eliminated the asset test. Other States have smaller programs, such as job training or after-school programs, with specific eligibility requirements for each program that affect only a very small number of households.

Using CPS data, we can identify households in which all members receive some type of cash public assistance benefits. These households are automatically eligible for SNAP, and those that qualify for a positive benefit are included in the denominator of the participation rates presented in this report.

There are, however, significant challenges in identifying households that are categorically eligible due to the receipt of noncash public assistance benefits. Because of these challenges, we do not include households that are eligible solely through State BBCE policies in our estimates of eligible households.

Note that to make the participation rate numerator and denominator as consistent as possible, we also restrict our estimates of participating households to those that are income-eligible or include only individuals receiving cash public assistance (pure PA). Because most BBCE households are not subject to an asset test, households flagged as categorically eligible for SNAP in the SNAP QC data file often have no recorded countable assets on the file. Because we are unable to determine whether participating BBCE households would fail the SNAP asset test, we are unable to remove them from the rate numerator. As a result, the numerator and denominator are not entirely consistent (Section B.1).

## **5. Determining Income Eligibility**

Noncategorically eligible SNAP households must meet income limits to be eligible for benefits. SNAP households that do not contain elderly or disabled members must have a gross income below 130 percent of the monthly poverty guidelines. There is no gross income limit for households with elderly or disabled members. In addition, all noncategorically eligible SNAP households must have a

net income below 100 percent of the poverty guidelines. Categorically eligible households must qualify for a positive benefit to be included in our estimates.

Before determining each household's income eligibility, we estimate monthly income and household net income as follows:

- **Estimating Monthly Income.** The CPS ASEC includes information on annual income, but eligibility for SNAP is determined according to monthly income. Therefore, we distribute annual income to months on the basis of patterns of income receipt shown by SIPP data, number of weeks worked shown in CPS data, and BLS data on employment and unemployment spells. We then sum the monthly income allocated to each month for each person in the household to determine the SNAP household's gross income for each month. Simply dividing annual income by 12 would underestimate the number of eligible individuals in any given month.
- **Estimating Net Income.** The CPS ASEC does not include information on the expenses deducted from gross income to compute net income. Therefore, we model net income as a function of the household's demographic and economic characteristics for each year. This model is based on patterns observed in the SNAP QC data. For the rates presented in this year's report, we updated the net income equation based on the results of an extensive assessment of the equation. The estimated relationships (coefficients) are presented in Table D.2.

We use the SNAP gross and net income screens and maximum benefit amounts for each fiscal year to determine each SNAP household's income eligibility and potential benefit. These parameters, along with other SNAP eligibility criteria, are presented in Tables D.3A and D.3B.

## 6. Determining Asset Eligibility

To be eligible for SNAP benefits, a noncategorically eligible SNAP household must have countable assets under the applicable SNAP asset limit. If the household contains an elderly or disabled person, the asset limit is \$3,000. For all other households, the asset limit is \$2,000.

Expansions in SNAP vehicle rules gradually were implemented across States throughout 2001 and 2002. Regulations implemented in January 2001 exclude from the asset test the value of vehicles with equity less than \$1,500 or used to produce income, as a home, to transport a disabled household member, or to carry fuel or water. In addition, for each adult household member, one

vehicle not totally excluded is counted at the fair market value (FMV) in excess of \$4,650. One additional vehicle per minor household member driven by the minor to work, school, or training also is counted at the vehicle's FMV in excess of \$4,650. Remaining vehicles are valued at the higher of the vehicle's FMV in excess of \$4,650, or equity.

Additional vehicle rule expansions began in July 2001, when States were permitted to align their SNAP vehicle rules with those in place for other programs, such as TANF or child care assistance. In response to this new flexibility, States gradually began changing their vehicle rules. Some States used the broader categorical eligibility rules described in Section A.4 to exempt more households from the asset test. By the end of FY 2007, all States had implemented changes in the SNAP vehicle rules.

Because asset balances are not reported in the CPS ASEC, we use equations estimated from our SIPP-based microsimulation model to impute the probability that income-eligible households subject to the asset test are asset-eligible, and thus fully eligible. For rates presented in prior reports, we used a microsimulation model based on SIPP data for 1999. For those presented in this year's report, we used our most recent model, based on SIPP data for 2005.

In our eligibility file, we simulate vehicle rules implemented through either program alignment or BBCE. We do not simulate other State BBCE asset rules, such as the elimination of the asset test (see also Section A.4).

For all years except for FY 2005, FY 2006, and FY 2008, we modeled mid-year vehicle rule changes by estimating asset imputation equations at two points in time. For instance, for FY 2009, the first set of equations simulated SNAP vehicle rules in place in March 2009 and was used to simulate the first half of the fiscal year. The second set of equations simulated vehicle rules in place in September 2009 and was used to simulate the second half of the fiscal year. The vehicle rules did not change significantly during FY 2005, FY 2006, and FY 2008, so we modeled only one set of equations for those years.

For the first half of FY 2009, we simulated 37 States as excluding the value of all vehicles when determining assets, and an additional 12 States as excluding at least one vehicle per household. For the second half of FY 2009, we simulated 41 States as excluding the value of all vehicles when determining assets, and an additional 8 States as excluding at least one vehicle per household. For the years covered in this report, we have modeled 22 different vehicle rules to fully capture State-level differences.

The unweighted counts of households in the CPS ASEC files used for this series of reports are listed in Table D.4. Unweighted counts of households by their probability of being eligible in FY 2009 are listed in Table D.5.

## **B. Determining the Number of SNAP Participants**

The number of participants used in the calculation of the participation rate comes from the SNAP Program Operations data and the SNAP QC data file. We use these databases because SNAP participation is underreported in the CPS ASEC. The Program Operations data provide counts of individuals and households that were issued benefits and the total dollar value of these benefits in each month of the fiscal year. The SNAP QC data file is an edited version of the raw data file generated by the SNAP Quality Control System and contains data on the demographic and economic characteristics of a sample of participating households. Sample sizes are found in Appendix Table D.6.

The SNAP QC data files used for the estimates presented in this report are weighted to match Program Operations counts for households, individuals, and benefits, adjusting those totals to exclude benefits issued in response to a disaster and those issued to individuals found to be ineligible. We determine benefits issued under disaster-related rules by using data from USDA on the number of households and individuals who received disaster benefits, the amount of benefits issued to those households, and the amount of additional disaster-related benefits issued to existing

SNAP participants. We reduced the Program Operations counts of households, individuals, and benefits by the disaster-related counts in the months and States in which the disaster relief occurred.<sup>16</sup> To adjust the Program Operations counts for benefits issued in error, we first use the unweighted SNAP QC data file to calculate disqualification rates for households, individuals, and benefits, and then reduce the Program Operations counts by those percentages.

The household disqualification rate is the percentage of all participating households that either are ineligible or eligible but not qualifying for a positive benefit. The individual disqualification rate is the percentage of all participating individuals in households not eligible for a positive benefit.<sup>17</sup> The benefit disqualification rate is slightly more complex—it takes into account over- and under-issuances to eligible households, as well as benefits issued to disqualified households.

To exclude participants in the numerator who are not included in the denominator, we remove households in Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands and households that do not meet the federal SNAP income guidelines and are not pure public assistance households (Section B.1).

We implemented several methodological changes to how we estimate the number of SNAP participants for the rate numerator. Changes included:

- **Reweighting SNAP QC data files for FY 2002 through FY 2004 to be consistent with the data files for FY 2005 and later.** Previously, we used older files that were weighted to match SNAP Program Operations counts of households, requiring us to ratio-adjust estimates of participants and benefits to match disaster- and ineligible-adjusted Program Operations counts of participants and benefits. The files are now all weighted to match SNAP Program Operations counts of households, individuals, and benefits.
- **Incorporating corrected Program Operations data from Missouri for FY 2003 through FY 2008.** During this period, Missouri’s individual counts were overestimated and the problem grew worse over time. The State system failed to subtract individuals who left participating households.

---

<sup>16</sup> In FY 2009, individuals in seven States were eligible through the SNAP disaster assistance program.

<sup>17</sup> The individual disqualification rate in FY 2009 was 1.7 percent (nearly 571,000 ineligible participants).

- **Implementing coding changes in the FY 2002 through FY 2009 SNAP QC files to correct for overreporting of TANF receipt in California.** Specifically, we developed an algorithm to re-categorize TANF income in certain households (for instance, those without children) as general assistance or other government assistance.

For the participation rate numerator, we use the average monthly number of participants over the 12 months in the fiscal year.

### **1. Identifying Categorically Eligible Participating SNAP Households**

Because the FY 2009 SNAP QC file does not contain the individual-level information on public assistance receipt needed to identify pure cash PA households, we used an algorithm for determining program coverage.<sup>18</sup> First, we assigned coverage flags for individual programs. SSI and GA cover only the person coded with the income, whereas TANF can cover additional family members, as follows:

- TANF received by the head of the household or the head's spouse covers the household head, spouse, and children (as identified by the relationship codes and ages).
- TANF received by a child of the head of the household covers that child and other relatives (presumably the grandchildren of the household head).
- In child-only households, TANF received by anyone in the household covers all of the children.

After assigning coverage flags, we identified a household as pure cash PA if everyone in the household was covered by TANF, SSI, or GA, or if the household had TANF income and all adults were covered by TANF, SSI, or GA. Pure cash PA households are categorically eligible for SNAP and therefore exempt from the income and asset tests. These households still must qualify for a positive benefit.

---

<sup>18</sup> The FY 2003 through FY 2008 SNAP QC data files also do not contain person-level information on program participation. The FY 2002 and earlier SNAP QC data files do include person-level information on program participation.

To be more consistent with our estimates of eligible individuals, we apply the SNAP income tests to households in the SNAP QC data and remove from the participation rate numerator those that are not income-eligible and not pure PA.<sup>19</sup> However, because the assets of categorically eligible households usually are not considered in the SNAP eligibility determination and so are not recorded in the SNAP QC data, we are unable to identify which categorically eligible households would fail the SNAP asset test. As a result, we do not remove any households from the numerator based on their asset eligibility. This results in an inconsistency between the numerator and denominator of the participation rate. Households that would fail the SNAP asset tests are included in the estimates of participating households in the numerator but excluded in estimates of eligible households (although, as mentioned earlier, we use expanded State-level vehicle rules in determining total countable assets for eligible households).<sup>20</sup>

### **C. Calculating SNAP Participation Rates**

We calculate participation rates by dividing the estimated number of participants by the estimated number of eligible individuals. The numbers of participants and eligible individuals used to calculate the FY 2009 participation rates are presented in Appendix B.

This report, like the previous two in the series, does not present participation rates for racial and ethnic subgroups because data on race and ethnicity for participating household heads in the FY 2007, FY 2008, and FY 2009 SNAP QC data are unreliable. SNAP applicants are now given the option of choosing more than one race to describe themselves or not reporting race or ethnicity at all. Consequently, race or ethnicity information was not recorded for a large number of participants (22 percent in FY 2009).

---

<sup>19</sup> We removed nearly 697,000 participants (2.1 percent) who were categorically eligible but not income-eligible from our FY 2009 participant total.

<sup>20</sup> See also Section A.4.

## **D. Comparison with SIPP-Based Rates**

In addition to the CPS-based estimates presented in this report, the SIPP also can be used to measure participation rates. SIPP data contain more of the information needed to estimate eligibility for SNAP, and the methodology used to estimate eligibility with SIPP data more closely replicates the actual SNAP eligibility determination process. However, the SIPP data cover a shorter period than the CPS, and certain types of SIPP data needed to estimate eligible individuals are available for only a limited number of years.

Historically, the trends identified through the CPS-based data have been consistent with those identified through SIPP-based data (Figure D.1). The change in methodology implemented with the 1995 estimates shifted the CPS-based rates up and, as a result, both the trend and the level of the CPS-based rates are more in line with SIPP-based rates.<sup>21</sup>

## **E. Future Methodological Improvements**

We are assessing options to correct the current inconsistency between the participation rate numerator and denominator. As described in Sections A.4 and B.1, reliable data on the asset holdings of BBCE households are not available in the SNAP QC data files. As a result, some households that would fail the SNAP asset test are included in estimates of participating households, but all such households are excluded from estimates of eligible households. We are working on a methodology to impute SNAP asset eligibility for participating BBCE households, making it possible to exclude these households from the rate numerator. We also are assessing the feasibility of estimating participation rates that include households eligible through BBCE in both the numerator and denominator. To this end, we have developed a set of 34 new asset equations that

---

<sup>21</sup> See Cody and Trippe (1997) for more information.

simulate all State asset eligibility policies, including the elimination of the asset test for households eligible through State BBCE policies.

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

**Table D.1. Percent of Nonelderly, Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration Who Are Eligible for SNAP, by Reason for Eligibility, October 2008 through March 2009**

	Percent Eligible by Reason for Eligibility				Total Percent Eligible for SNAP <sup>a</sup>
	Living in Waiver Area	Have Not Exceeded Time Limits <sup>a</sup>	In E & T Program	Received Exemption	
Alabama	10	62 / 72	0	0	66 / 75
Alaska	100	62 / 72	0	0	100
Arizona	32	62 / 72	0	0	74 / 81
Arkansas	90	62 / 72	0	0	96 / 97
California	100	62 / 72	1	0	100
Colorado	14	62 / 72	100	0	100
Connecticut	44	62 / 72	0	0	79 / 84
Delaware	0	62 / 72	100	0	100
District of Columbia	100	62 / 72	0	0	100
Florida	3	62 / 72	100	1	100
Georgia	33	62 / 72	0	0	74 / 81
Hawaii	1	62 / 72	0	0	62 / 72
Idaho	18	62 / 72	100	0	100
Illinois	66	62 / 72	0	0	87 / 90
Indiana	46	62 / 72	0	1	80 / 85
Iowa	0	62 / 72	0	0	62 / 72
Kansas	36	62 / 72	0	0	75 / 82
Kentucky	61	62 / 72	0	0	85 / 89
Louisiana	70	62 / 72	0	0	89 / 92
Maine	64	62 / 72	0	0	86 / 90
Maryland	2	62 / 72	0	0	63 / 73
Massachusetts	58	62 / 72	100	0	100
Michigan	100	62 / 72	0	0	100
Minnesota	15	62 / 72	0	0	67 / 76
Mississippi	100	62 / 72	0	0	100
Missouri	38	62 / 72	0	0	76 / 83
Montana	15	62 / 72	1	0	68 / 76
Nebraska	1	62 / 72	100	1	100
Nevada	1	62 / 72	0	0	62 / 72
New Hampshire	0	62 / 72	0	0	62 / 72
New Jersey	61	62 / 72	100	0	100
New Mexico	47	62 / 72	0	0	80 / 85
New York	42	62 / 72	100	1	100
North Carolina	100	62 / 72	0	0	100
North Dakota	20	62 / 72	0	0	69 / 78
Ohio	100	62 / 72	1	0	100
Oklahoma	14	62 / 72	0	0	67 / 76
Oregon	100	62 / 72	6	0	100
Pennsylvania	62	62 / 72	0	0	86 / 89
Rhode Island	51	62 / 72	0	0	81 / 86
South Carolina	100	62 / 72	0	0	100
South Dakota	17	62 / 72	100	0	100
Tennessee	82	62 / 72	0	0	93 / 95
Texas	1	62 / 72	100	0	100
Utah	8	62 / 72	100	0	100
Vermont	0	62 / 72	0	1	62 / 72
Virginia	16	62 / 72	0	0	68 / 76
Washington	70	62 / 72	0	0	89 / 92
West Virginia	54	62 / 72	0	0	83 / 87
Wisconsin	56	62 / 72	0	0	83 / 88
Wyoming	7	62 / 72	0	0	64 / 74

Note: The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), effective April 1, 2009, allowed States to suspend the time limit on benefits for nondisabled nonelderly adults subject to work registration. All of these individuals thus were potentially eligible during the second half of FY 2009.

<sup>a</sup> The first number is for individuals in households reporting receipt of SNAP benefits in the SIPP. The second number is for individuals in households not reporting receipt of SNAP benefits in the SIPP.

**Table D.2. Results for the SNAP Net Income Regression Equations**

Explanatory Variable	Coefficients Estimated Using Administrative Data For:			
	2002	2003	2004	2005
Constant	462.26816 (517.57699)	-232.84344 * (12.22702)	-213.80218 * (15.42724)	-238.46755 * (14.60542)
Gross Income Minus Standard and Earned Income Deductions	5.29832 (3.86286)	0.50862 * (0.08211)	0.67856 * (0.11017)	0.52484 * (0.10332)
Flag for No Housing Expenses	96.17917 * (1.91068)	120.97444 * (2.01119)	127.44497 * (2.17858)	130.97974 * (2.33026)
Maximum Allowable Shelter Expense Deduction	-0.03489 * (0.00541)	-0.02912 * (0.00543)	-0.03484 * (0.00558)	-0.03662 * (0.00583)
Maximum Allowable Dependent Care Deduction	-0.01520 * (0.00652)	-0.01388 * (0.00674)	-0.01719 * (0.00705)	-0.02079 * (0.00755)
Earned Income	0.85268 (0.77113)	-0.10279 * (0.01672)	-0.06244 * (0.02226)	-0.09394 * (0.02093)
TANF Income	0.08033 * (0.00996)	0.07926 * (0.01147)	0.05500 * (0.01018)	0.08859 * (0.01294)
TANF Income Squared	-0.00004 * (0.00001)	-0.00005 * (0.00002)	-0.000006 (0.00001)	-0.00005 * (0.00002)
SSI Income	-0.02243 * (0.01060)	-0.02004 (0.01146)	-0.04982 * (0.01255)	-0.01927 (0.01181)
SSI Income Squared	0.00004 * (0.00001)	0.00005 * (0.00001)	0.00008 * (0.00001)	0.00006 * (0.00001)
Gross Income	-4.16111 (3.86305)	0.72601 * (0.08478)	0.52429 * (0.11275)	0.69058 * (0.10559)
Gross Income Squared	-0.000004 (0.000004)	-0.00002 * (0.000004)	-0.00002 * (0.000004)	-0.00002 * (0.000004)
Flag for Gross Income Between \$101 and \$200	89.33288 * (5.84177)	110.92558 * (6.01782)	122.88924 * (6.15485)	126.64003 * (6.53572)
Flag for Gross Income Between \$201 and \$300	58.25458 * (4.49534)	82.77950 * (4.65854)	88.04247 * (4.75914)	96.34600 * (5.07955)
Flag for Gross Income Between \$301 and \$400	25.97329 * (3.74638)	42.69180 * (3.96691)	51.76892 * (4.06854)	50.17862 * (4.38421)
Flag for Gross Income Between \$401 and \$500	1.15991 (3.33412)	7.13278 * (3.47534)	18.43139 * (3.79320)	17.17738 * (4.10168)
Gross Income as Percent of Poverty	-1.21303 * (0.09895)	-1.98941 * (0.10949)	-2.04748 * (0.11317)	-2.22275 * (0.12068)

**Table D.2 (continued)**

Explanatory Variable	Coefficients Estimated Using Administrative Data For:			
	2002	2003	2004	2005
Flag for Households Residing in Alaska	403.70646 (367.05373)	-29.17613 * (11.91199)	-11.19872 (13.87471)	-34.59401 * (13.24185)
Flag for Households Residing in Hawaii	251.83453 (212.52671)	35.77853 * (7.43600)	67.83828 * (8.60004)	53.99457 * (8.51429)
Flag for Households Residing in the Northeast	-47.82769 * (2.90966)	12.76648 * (3.03996)	-28.94330 * (3.22375)	-28.72897 * (3.34144)
Flag for Households Residing in the Mid-Atlantic	-3.64431 (2.75574)	26.01853 * (2.85748)	22.36779 * (3.00033)	25.99073 * (3.16333)
Flag for Households Residing in the Southeast	15.67159 * (2.68321)	35.23309 * (2.79722)	41.14158 * (2.93181)	38.02640 * (3.08059)
Flag for Households Residing in the Midwest	-11.35821 * (2.83984)	-1.21154 (3.02371)	1.26323 (3.19921)	1.90979 (3.33901)
Flag for Households Residing in the Southwest	12.25301 * (2.83397)	41.47449 * (2.98114)	45.95352 * (3.15115)	53.47476 * (3.40270)
Flag for Households Residing in the Mountain Plains	-3.09525 (2.68117)	23.81073 * (2.76543)	20.9635 * (2.90929)	19.08258 * (3.03380)
Flag for Households Participating in MFIP	3.91158 (9.11521)	-75.71792 * (8.00515)	-46.95903 * (8.59192)	-37.34364 * (8.91527)
SNAP Unit Size	-14.5413 * (1.37322)	-22.15859 * (1.57875)	-20.97018 * (1.69422)	-22.74809 * (1.78686)
Flag for Under Age 60 and Receiving SSI	38.00917 * (3.48759)	32.84767 * (3.76262)	37.71546 * (4.01494)	35.96474 * (4.14369)
Flag for Age 60 and Older and Receiving SSI	34.91302 * (3.69210)	40.46920 * (4.00994)	35.05014 * (4.33044)	29.93146 * (4.53211)
Flag for Households with Elderly Individuals	10.57015 * (2.96451)	14.85572 * (3.10149)	20.79162 * (3.21674)	20.91274 * (3.36476)
Flag for Single-Parent Households	-16.61897 * (2.26497)	-16.97942 * (2.44518)	-19.95459 * (2.57671)	-17.86048 * (2.72745)
Flag for Multiple-Adult Households	-21.21425 * (2.71684)	-25.37446 * (2.87114)	-26.98722 * (3.01331)	-23.83565 * (3.20663)
Sample Size	40,534	40,527	39,278	37,239
R <sup>2</sup>	0.8465	0.8404	0.8345	0.8322
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.8463	0.8403	0.8344	0.8321

**Table D.2 (continued)**

Explanatory Variable	Coefficients Estimated Using Administrative Data For:			
	2006	2007	2008	2009
Constant	-225.30056 * (15.16123)	-251.66704 * (15.53204)	-243.41801 * (15.48813)	-282.62278 * (16.33721)
Gross Income Minus Standard and Earned Income Deductions	0.71426 * (0.10737)	0.48001 * (0.11050)	0.65007 * (0.11237)	0.21379 (0.11137)
Flag for No Housing Expenses	144.52013 * (2.47375)	148.57605 * (2.56059)	160.20244 * (2.61064)	167.67140 * (2.69402)
Maximum Allowable Shelter Expense Deduction	-0.05279 * (0.00615)	-0.05422 * (0.00598)	-0.06453 * (0.00586)	-0.06924 * (0.00558)
Maximum Allowable Dependent Care Deduction	-0.03120 * (0.00827)	-0.02856 * (0.00847)	-0.01983 * (0.00874)	NA
Earned Income	-0.05000 * (0.02179)	-0.10459 * (0.02231)	-0.07284 * (0.02260)	-0.16525 * (0.02238)
TANF Income	0.09716 * (0.01521)	0.13229 * (0.01761)	0.15082 * (0.01790)	0.10543 * (0.01905)
TANF Income Squared	-0.00005 * (0.00002)	-0.00015 * (0.00003)	-0.00014 * (0.00003)	-0.00010 * (0.00003)
SSI Income	-0.03057 * (0.01275)	-0.05938 * (0.01236)	-0.01366 (0.00788)	-0.06972 * (0.01297)
SSI Income Squared	0.00007 * (0.00001)	0.00008 * (0.00001)	0.00004 * (0.000004)	0.00010 * (0.00001)
Gross Income	0.43667 * (0.10973)	0.64462 * (0.11278)	0.54523 * (0.11397)	0.90130 * (0.11282)
Gross Income Squared	-0.000009 * (0.000003)	0.000001 (0.000004)	-0.00001 * (0.000003)	0.000007 * (0.000003)
Flag for Gross Income Between \$101 and \$200	137.11199 * (7.03341)	139.23361 * (7.43599)	150.34132 * (7.68026)	126.61994 * (8.10617)
Flag for Gross Income Between \$201 and \$300	107.48712 * (5.55434)	110.74841 * (5.76847)	127.50697 * (5.87187)	115.58705 * (6.02565)
Flag for Gross Income Between \$301 and \$400	62.06651 * (4.93169)	68.31497 * (5.24097)	82.72157 * (5.40098)	81.90787 * (5.50625)
Flag for Gross Income Between \$401 and \$500	26.02618 * (4.37178)	30.79949 * (4.57730)	38.30853 * (4.68919)	33.42467 * (4.90124)
Gross Income as Percent of Poverty	-1.73303 * (0.12133)	-1.73639 * (0.12221)	-2.16593 * (0.11818)	-2.08595 * (0.11879)

**Table D.2 (continued)**

Explanatory Variable	Coefficients Estimated Using Administrative Data For:			
	2006	2007	2008	2009
Flag for Households Residing in Alaska	-7.66320 (14.08454)	-39.68322 * (14.38966)	-3.78074 (14.74351)	-58.91693 * (15.03872)
Flag for Households Residing in Hawaii	76.13270 * (9.08095)	78.14920 * (9.25431)	69.93645 * (9.42666)	57.80910 * (9.61621)
Flag for Households Residing in the Northeast	-53.54739 * (3.55006)	-69.18551 * (3.69508)	-87.69473 * (3.74070)	-138.38284 * (3.84056)
Flag for Households Residing in the Mid-Atlantic	24.30856 * (3.41078)	19.24231 * (3.64377)	17.05863 * (3.69785)	17.34879 * (3.80986)
Flag for Households Residing in the Southeast	38.63583 * (3.28003)	36.11126 * (3.48489)	44.74404 * (3.54579)	58.25174 * (3.65941)
Flag for Households Residing in the Midwest	-18.24810 * (3.57261)	-4.51869 (3.44838)	-2.95452 (3.51270)	-0.96888 (3.86163)
Flag for Households Residing in the Southwest	51.81300 * (3.64815)	59.02491 * (3.77555)	59.55910 * (3.89010)	76.07109 * (3.96513)
Flag for Households Residing in the Mountain Plains	11.72823 * (3.28550)	9.83811 * (3.47673)	10.05121 * (3.55718)	26.86742 * (3.59017)
Flag for Households Participating in MFIP	68.23838 * (11.54967)	30.63092 * (11.97531)	48.26114 * (12.40775)	48.65797 * (12.66070)
SNAP Unit Size	-17.39286 * (1.93655)	-21.43660 * (2.02810)	-24.21800 * (2.13414)	-25.29834 * (2.03563)
Flag for Under Age 60 and Receiving SSI	37.62900 * (4.49716)	37.79683 * (4.53139)	32.20562 * (4.27506)	37.26134 * (5.12219)
Flag for Age 60 and Older and Receiving SSI	37.99501 * (4.78654)	41.30378 * (4.93554)	35.03806 * (4.79063)	50.47647 * (5.61088)
Flag for Households with Elderly Individuals	17.71913 * (3.50797)	16.62000 * (3.57731)	16.75503 * (3.55923)	6.54721 (3.72006)
Flag for Single-Parent Households	-19.53927 * (2.95730)	-12.40165 * (3.09676)	-25.22877 * (3.21548)	-22.66879 * (3.24370)
Flag for Multiple-Adult Households	-21.15388 * (3.45088)	-15.07486 * (3.57305)	-27.87481 * (3.65784)	-25.44308 * (3.69756)
Sample Size	36,202	37,174	38,762	38,167
R <sup>2</sup>	0.8199	0.8126	0.8149	0.8166
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.8198	0.8124	0.8148	0.8164

\*Indicates significance at the .05 level using a two-tailed t-test. Coefficients identified as significant at the .05 level are those with t-values greater than 1.96.

NA indicates that the variable is not applicable for the specified year.

**Table D.3A. Fiscal Year 2009 SNAP Eligibility Parameters, October 2008 through March 2009**

Countable Assets Screen	\$2,000 for households without elderly or disabled members \$3,000 for households with elderly or disabled members			
Gross Income Screen	130 percent of the Monthly Poverty Guidelines			
Net Income Screen	100 percent of the Monthly Poverty Guidelines			
Monthly Poverty Guidelines	Household Size	Contiguous US	Alaska	Hawaii
	1	\$ 867	\$1,084	\$ 997
	2	1,167	1,459	1,342
	3	1,467	1,834	1,687
	4	1,767	2,209	2,032
	5	2,067	2,584	2,377
	6	2,367	2,959	2,722
	7	2,667	3,334	3,067
	8	2,967	3,709	3,412
	Each Additional	+ 300	+ 375	+ 345
Standard Deduction	Household Size	Contiguous US	Alaska	Hawaii
	1 – 3	\$144	\$246	\$203
	4	147	246	203
	5	172	246	203
	6+	197	246	226
Maximum Dependent Care Deduction	No maximum as of October 1, 2008			
Excess Shelter Deduction		Contiguous US	Alaska	Hawaii
		\$446	\$713	\$601
Benefit Calculation	Benefit = Maximum benefit - 30 percent of Net Income			
Maximum Monthly Benefit	Household Size	Contiguous US	Alaska	Hawaii
	1	\$ 176	\$ 210	\$ 276
	2	323	385	506
	3	463	552	725
	4	588	701	921
	5	698	833	1,094
	6	838	999	1,313
	7	926	1,105	1,451
	8	1,058	1,263	1,658
	Each Additional	+ 132	+ 158	+ 207
Minimum Monthly Benefit	Household Size	Contiguous US	Alaska	Hawaii
	1 – 2	\$14	\$17	\$22
	3+	0	0	0
Categorically Eligible	Receipt of cash or in-kind TANF benefits, SSI, or GA			
SSI Cashout States	California only			

Notes: Eligibility parameters are for the 50 States and the District of Columbia. These parameters were in effect from October 1, 2008 through March 31, 2009.

**Table D.3B. Fiscal Year 2009 SNAP Eligibility Parameters, April 2009 through September 2009**

Countable Assets Screen	\$2,000 for households without elderly or disabled members \$3,000 for households with elderly or disabled members			
Gross Income Screen	130 percent of the Monthly Poverty Guidelines			
Net Income Screen	100 percent of the Monthly Poverty Guidelines			
Monthly Poverty Guidelines	Household Size	Contiguous US	Alaska	Hawaii
	1	\$ 867	\$1,084	\$ 997
	2	1,167	1,459	1,342
	3	1,467	1,834	1,687
	4	1,767	2,209	2,032
	5	2,067	2,584	2,377
	6	2,367	2,959	2,722
	7	2,667	3,334	3,067
	8	2,967	3,709	3,412
	Each Additional	+ 300	+ 375	+ 345
Standard Deduction	Household Size	Contiguous US	Alaska	Hawaii
	1 – 3	\$144	\$246	\$203
	4	147	246	203
	5	172	246	203
	6+	197	246	226
Maximum Dependent Care Deduction	No maximum as of October 1, 2008			
Excess Shelter Deduction		Contiguous US	Alaska	Hawaii
		\$446	\$713	\$601
Benefit Calculation	Benefit = Maximum benefit - 30 percent of Net Income			
Maximum Monthly Benefit	Household Size	Contiguous US	Alaska	Hawaii
	1	\$ 200	\$ 239	\$ 314
	2	367	438	575
	3	526	627	824
	4	668	797	1,046
	5	793	946	1,243
	6	952	1,135	1,491
	7	1,052	1,255	1,648
	8	1,202	1,434	1,884
	Each Additional	+ 150	+ 179	+ 236
Minimum Monthly Benefit	Household Size	Contiguous US	Alaska	Hawaii
	1 – 2	\$16	\$19	\$25
	3+	0	0	0
Categorically Eligible	Receipt of cash or in-kind TANF benefits, SSI, or GA			
SSI Cashout States	California only			

Notes: Eligibility parameters are for the 50 States and the District of Columbia. These parameters were in effect from April 1, 2009 through September 30, 2009.

**Table D.4. Unweighted Sample Sizes for the CPS ASEC, 1977 to 2010**

CPS ASEC Year	All Households	Analysis Year(s)
1977	68,294	1976
1979	68,455	1978
1981	81,451	1980
1983	73,195	1982
1985	74,568	1984
1987	73,843	1986
1989	70,454	1988
1991	75,076	1990
1992	74,236	1991
1993	73,878	1992
1994	73,126	1993
1995	72,152	1994
1996	63,339	1995
1997	64,046	1996
1998	64,659	1997
1999	65,377	1998
2000	51,016	1999
2001	78,054	2000
2002	78,265	2001, 2002
2003	78,310	2002, 2003
2004	77,149	2003, 2004
2005	76,447	2004, 2005
2006	75,939	2005, 2006
2007	75,477	2006, 2007
2008	75,872	2007, 2008
2009	76,185	2008, 2009
2010	76,260	2009

**Table D.5. Unweighted Counts of Households by the Probability of Being Eligible,  
FY 2009 Median Month**

	Unweighted Counts
All Households <sup>a</sup>	74,698
Households With a Probability of Being Eligible Greater Than Zero	
Total	16,746
Probability of Being Eligible	
>0.0 to 0.25	693
>0.25 to 0.50	355
>0.50 to 0.75	778
>0.75 to <1.00	12,455
1.00	2,485

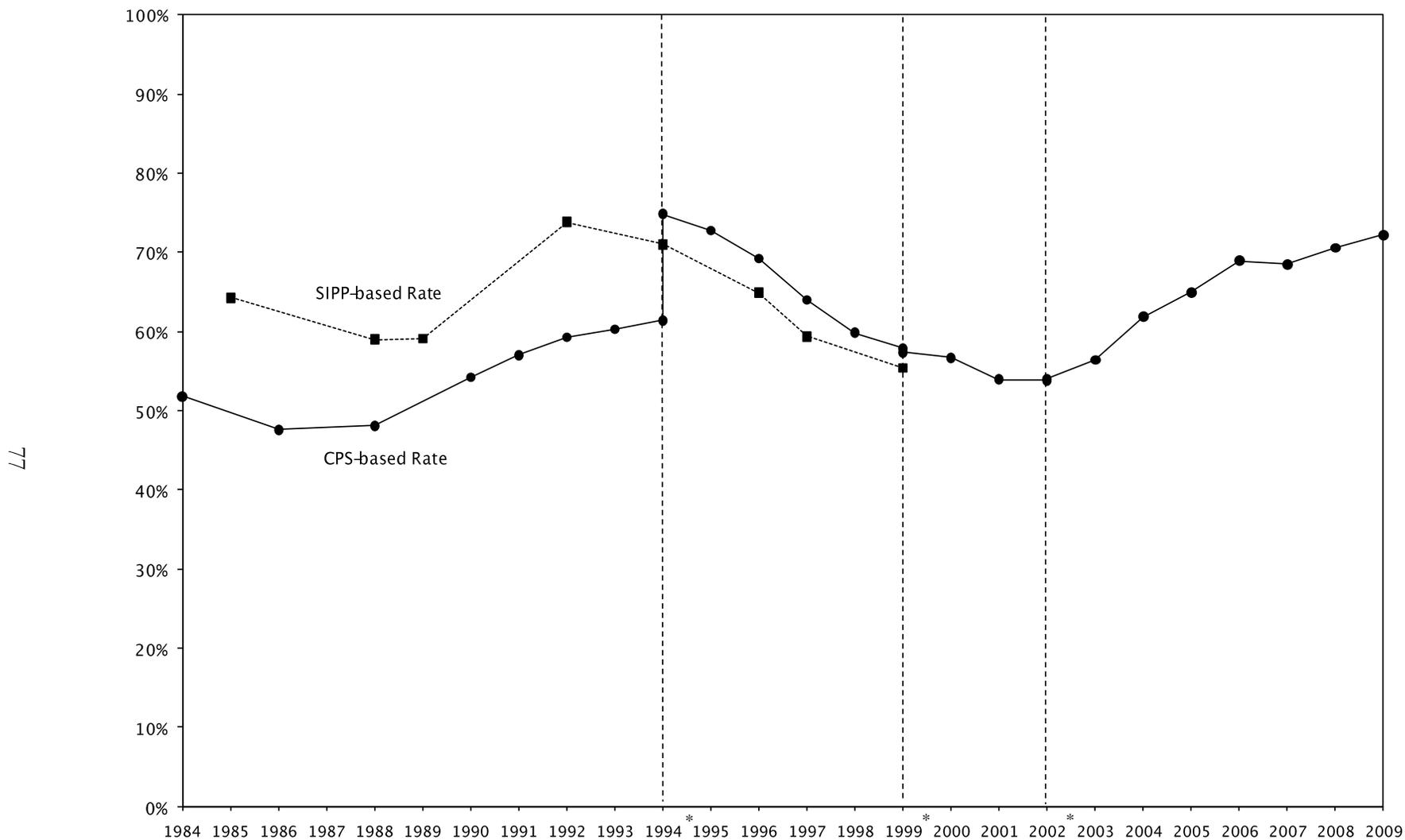
Note: Estimates in this table reflect median monthly numbers of CPS households. We calculate a household's probability of being eligible for SNAP benefits by determining whether it passes the appropriate income tests and then estimating the probability of it passing the asset test. In dwelling units with multiple SNAP households, the probabilities of each household are combined into one dwelling unit probability. We multiply the final probability of being eligible by the weight to determine the household's contribution to the total (weighted) number of eligible households.

<sup>a</sup> This count of unweighted households is lower than that presented in Table D.4 because it only includes dwelling units that form potentially eligible SNAP households. Those that do not form SNAP households, and are thus excluded from the table, contain only categorically-ineligible individuals. These individuals are undocumented noncitizens, California SSI recipients, full-time students, living in group quarters, or living in dwelling units headed by a member of the Armed Forces.

**Table D.6. Unweighted Sample Sizes for the SNAP QC Case Records**

Month/Year	SNAP QC Case Records
September 1976	11,038
February 1978	14,211
August 1980	4,140
August 1982	7,224
August 1984	6,918
July/August 1986	11,010
July/August 1988	10,695
July/August 1990	10,639
July/August 1991	10,602
July/August 1992	9,586
July/August 1993	9,389
August/September 1994	8,933
August/September 1995	8,313
August/September 1996	8,304
August/September 1997	7,907
August/September 1998	7,336
August/September 1999	7,558
Fiscal Year 1999	46,935
Fiscal Year 2000	46,336
Fiscal Year 2001	46,412
Fiscal Year 2002	47,602
Fiscal Year 2003	48,896
Fiscal Year 2004	48,806
Fiscal Year 2005	46,673
Fiscal Year 2006	45,734
Fiscal Year 2007	47,469
Fiscal Year 2008	50,214
Fiscal Year 2009	51,250

Figure D.1. Trends in Individual Participation Rates by Data Source, 1984 to 2009



Source: SNAP Program Operations, SNAP QC, SIPP, and CPS ASEC data for the years shown.

\* There are breaks in the time series in 1994, 1999, and 2002 due to revisions in the methodology for determining eligibility.

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

## **APPENDIX E**

### **SAMPLING ERROR OF PARTICIPATION RATE ESTIMATES**

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

## SAMPLING ERROR OF PARTICIPATION RATE ESTIMATES

The participation rates contained in this report represent the ratio of SNAP participants to SNAP-eligible individuals. Participant counts are based on SNAP Program Operations data and SNAP Quality Control (SNAP QC) data. Eligible counts are based on CPS ASEC data. Since both counts are derived from samples, both are subject to statistical sampling error, as are the resulting participation rate estimates.

### Standard Errors of Participation Rates

One indicator of the magnitude of the sampling error associated with a given estimate is its standard error. Standard errors measure the variation in estimated values that would be observed if multiple replications of the sample were drawn. The magnitude of the standard errors depends on three factors: (1) the degree of variation in the variable within the population from which the sample is drawn; (2) the design of the sample, including such issues as stratification and sampling probabilities; and (3) the size of the sample on which the estimate is based.

Generally, the standard error of a nonlinear variable, such as a participation rate, cannot be estimated directly. Rather, one must estimate the standard error of a linear approximation of the nonlinear variable. To estimate the standard error of participation rates contained in this report, we use a Taylor series expansion to produce a linear approximation of the participation rate. The variance of the participation rate,  $\text{var}(r)$ , can be expressed as a function of the number of participants ( $p$ ), the number of eligible individuals ( $e$ ), and their respective variances:

$$(1) \quad \text{var}(r) = \text{var}(p/e) = (p/e)^2 [\text{var}(p)/p^2 + \text{var}(e)/e^2]$$

The standard error of the participation rate is simply the square root of the variance.

In the SNAP QC data file, we directly calculate the variance of the number of participants using replicate weights.<sup>1</sup> In the CPS, the Census Bureau produces a set of replicate weights, which we have incorporated into the estimation of the variance of the number of eligible individuals using the CPS-recommended replicate weight method.

## **Confidence Intervals**

Standard errors can be used to compute confidence intervals for the estimated participation rates. A confidence interval is a range of values that will contain the true value of an estimated participation rate with a known probability. For instance, a 90-percent confidence interval extends 1.645 standard errors above and below the estimated rate, and indicates that there is a 90-percent chance that the confidence interval will contain the true value. Table E.1 presents standard errors and confidence intervals for selected participation rates.

---

<sup>1</sup> More details are available in Appendix E of Leftin et al. (2010).

**Table E.1. Sampling Error Associated with Selected Participation Rates, Fiscal Year 2009**

Variable	Participation Rate with 90% Confidence Interval	Eligibles		Participants	
		Number	Standard Error	Number	Standard Error
Individuals	72.2 +/- 1.0	44,512,089	362,849	32,145,656	42,801
Households	72.2 +/- 1.0	20,330,221	177,879	14,684,528	15,366
Benefits	90.9 +/- 1.5	4,443,998,354	44,275,406	4,040,194,552	5,190,784
Children <sup>a</sup>	91.7 +/- 1.6	16,661,931	171,821	15,277,080	52,905
Nonelderly Adults <sup>a</sup>	70.8 +/- 1.2	20,036,967	199,582	14,184,427	55,801
Elderly Individuals <sup>a</sup>	34.3 +/- 1.2	7,813,191	115,890	2,683,361	38,221
Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration	55.7 +/- 2.9	2,927,354	74,220	1,631,315	30,261
Noncitizens	55.6 +/- 4.2	2,242,595	67,757	1,246,985	43,219
Citizen Children Living with Noncitizen Adults	62.8 +/- 3.7	4,107,121	102,045	2,577,930	67,248
Individuals in Households with Children and One Adult	114.8 +/- 3.8	11,187,299	185,175	12,842,721	147,930
Individuals In Households					
With Earnings	59.8 +/- 1.4	20,896,668	223,050	12,503,383	123,471
With TANF	96.4 +/- 5.0	4,500,711	115,066	4,337,242	82,038
With Nonelderly SSI	70.5 +/- 3.1	6,701,338	141,872	4,724,572	79,951
With Elderly SSI	68.5 +/- 4.1	2,245,744	63,635	1,537,902	35,890
Individuals In Households with Very Low Income	114.1 +/- 4.2	8,548,570	164,053	9,756,155	114,130
Individuals In Households with Income Slightly Above Poverty	35.8 +/- 1.4	10,330,696	160,324	3,695,347	67,257

Sources: SNAP Program Operations, SNAP QC, and CPS ASEC data.

Note: Participant, eligibility, and benefit totals represent monthly averages. Participation rates over 100 percent are the result of discrepancies between the estimates of eligible and participating individuals and households, including the data from which they are estimated and differing treatment of some categorically eligible households. See Appendix D for more information.

<sup>a</sup> The participant totals for children, nonelderly adults, and elderly individuals presented in this table do not match the participants totals in Tables 3, B.3, and B.5A. The totals in the earlier tables include individuals with missing data on age for whom we impute an age category. The totals in this table include only individuals with reported age, the population for which standard errors were calculated.

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

**APPENDIX F**  
**ECONOMIC AND POLICY INFLUENCES ON SNAP**

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

**Table F.1. Summary of Major Influences on SNAP Participation Rates, 1976–2009**

Period of Change	Major Influences	Effect on Number of Participants and Eligible Individuals	Participation Rate Change
1978 to 1980	Food Stamp Act of 1977	Substantial increase in participants. Decrease in eligible individuals.	Up 17 points
1980 to 1982	Recession	Almost no change in participants. Substantial increase in eligible individuals.	Down 3 points
1982 to 1984	Economic recovery	Slight decrease in both participants and eligible individuals.	No change
1984 to 1986	1985 Food Security Act	Almost no change in participants. Substantial increase in eligible individuals.	Down 4 points
1986 to 1988	Growth in economy	Small decrease in participants and eligible individuals.	No change
1988 to 1990	Medicaid expansion, Homeless Assistance Act, IRCA, worsening economy	Increase in participants. Small decrease in eligible individuals.	Up 6 points
1990 to 1992	Continued Medicaid expansion, recession	Increase in participants. Smaller percent increase in eligible individuals.	Up 5 points
1992 to 1993	Improving economy	Increase in participants. Smaller percent increase in eligible individuals.	Up 1 point
1993 to 1994	Improving economy	No change in participants. Small drop in eligible individuals.	Up 1 point
1994 to 1995	Improving economy	Decrease in eligible individuals. Relatively larger decrease in participants.	Down 2 points
1995 to 1996	Improving economy	No change in eligible individuals. Decrease in participants.	Down 3 points
1996 to 1997	Welfare reform, improving economy	Large decrease in participants and eligible individuals. Larger decrease in participants.	Down 5 points
1997 to 1998	Welfare reform, improving economy	Large decrease in participants and eligible individuals. Larger decrease in participants.	Down 4 points
1998 to 1999	Welfare reform, improving economy	Decrease in participants and eligible individuals. Larger decrease in participants.	Down 2 points
1999 to 2000	Welfare reform, improving economy	Decrease in participants and eligible individuals. Larger decrease in participants.	Down less than 1 point
2000 to 2001	Expanded vehicle exclusions, worsening economy	Slight increase in participants. Large increase in eligible individuals.	Down 3 points
2001 to 2002(a)	Expanded vehicle exclusions, increased poverty	Large increase in participants and eligible individuals. Larger increase in eligible individuals.	Down less than 1 point
2002(b) to 2003	Increased outreach, increased eligibility for noncitizens, increased poverty, expanded vehicle exclusions	Increase in both participants and eligible individuals.	Up 2 points

Table F.1 (continued)

Period of Change	Major Influences	Effect on Number of Participants and Eligible Individuals	Participation Rate Change
2003 to 2004	Increased outreach, increased poverty, increased eligibility for immigrant children, expanded vehicle exclusions	Increase in both participants and eligible individuals. Larger increase in participants.	Up more than 5 points
2004 to 2005	Increased outreach, expanded vehicle exclusions	Increase in both participants and eligible individuals. Larger increase in participants.	Up 3 points
2005 to 2006	Increased outreach, decreased poverty, expanded vehicle exclusions	Increase in participants. Decrease in eligible individuals.	Up 4 points
2006 to 2007	Increased outreach, increased poverty, expanded vehicle exclusions	Increase in participants. Larger increase in eligible individuals.	Down less than 1 point
2007 to 2008	Worsening economy, increased outreach, expanded vehicle exclusions	Increases in both participants and eligible individuals	Up 2 points
2008 to 2009	Recession, increased outreach, increase in minimum benefit allotments, midyear increase in maximum benefit allotments, midyear State option to eliminate time-limited benefits, expanded vehicle exclusions	Large increases in both participants and eligible individuals	Up more than 1 point

**Table F.2. Major Economic Indicators, Calendar Years 1976–2009**

Year	Real GDP Increase <sup>a</sup>	Productivity Increase <sup>b</sup>	Unemployment Rate <sup>c</sup>	Inflation Rate <sup>d</sup>	Poverty Rate	Individuals in Poverty (000s)
1976	5.3	3.1	7.7	5.8	11.8	24,975
1977	4.6	1.7	7.1	6.4	11.6	24,720
1978	5.6	1.1	6.1	7.0	11.4	24,497
1979	3.2	0.0	5.8	8.3	11.7	26,072
1980	-0.2	-0.2	7.1	9.1	13.0	29,272
1981	2.5	2.1	7.6	9.4	14.0	31,822
1982	-1.9	-0.8	9.7	6.1	15.0	34,398
1983	4.5	3.6	9.6	4.0	15.2	35,303
1984	7.2	2.7	7.5	3.8	14.4	33,700
1985	4.1	2.2	7.2	3.0	14.0	33,064
1986	3.5	2.9	7.0	2.2	13.6	32,370
1987	3.4	0.5	6.2	2.7	13.4	32,221
1988	4.1	1.5	5.5	3.4	13.0	31,745
1989	3.5	1.0	5.3	3.8	12.8	31,528
1990	1.9	2.1	5.6	3.9	13.5	33,585
1991	-0.2	1.6	6.8	3.5	14.2	35,708
1992	3.3	4.3	7.5	2.3	14.8	38,014
1993	2.7	0.4	6.9	2.3	15.1	39,265
1994	4.0	1.0	6.1	2.1	14.5	38,059
1995	2.5	0.1	5.6	2.0	13.8	36,425
1996	3.7	3.0	5.4	1.9	13.7	36,529
1997	4.5	1.9	4.9	1.7	13.3	35,574
1998	4.2	2.8	4.5	1.1	12.7	34,476
1999	4.5	3.1	4.2	1.4	11.8	32,258
2000	3.7	2.9	4.0	2.2	11.3	31,581
2001	0.8	2.5	4.7	2.4	11.7	32,907
2002	1.6	4.1	5.8	1.7	12.1	34,570
2003	2.5	3.8	6.0	2.1	12.5	35,861
2004	3.6	2.9	5.5	2.9	12.7	37,040
2005	2.9	1.8	5.1	3.3	12.6	36,950
2006	2.8	0.9	4.6	3.2	12.3	36,460
2007	2.0	1.6	4.6	2.7	12.5	37,276
2008	1.1	2.7	5.8	2.2	13.2	39,829
2009	-2.4	3.7	9.3	1.2	14.3	43,569

Sources (by column of data):

First: Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, National Income and Product Accounts.

Second: Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Major Sector Productivity and Costs Index."

Third: Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Fourth: Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, National Income and Product Accounts.

Fifth and sixth: U.S. Census Bureau, *Poverty in the United States*.

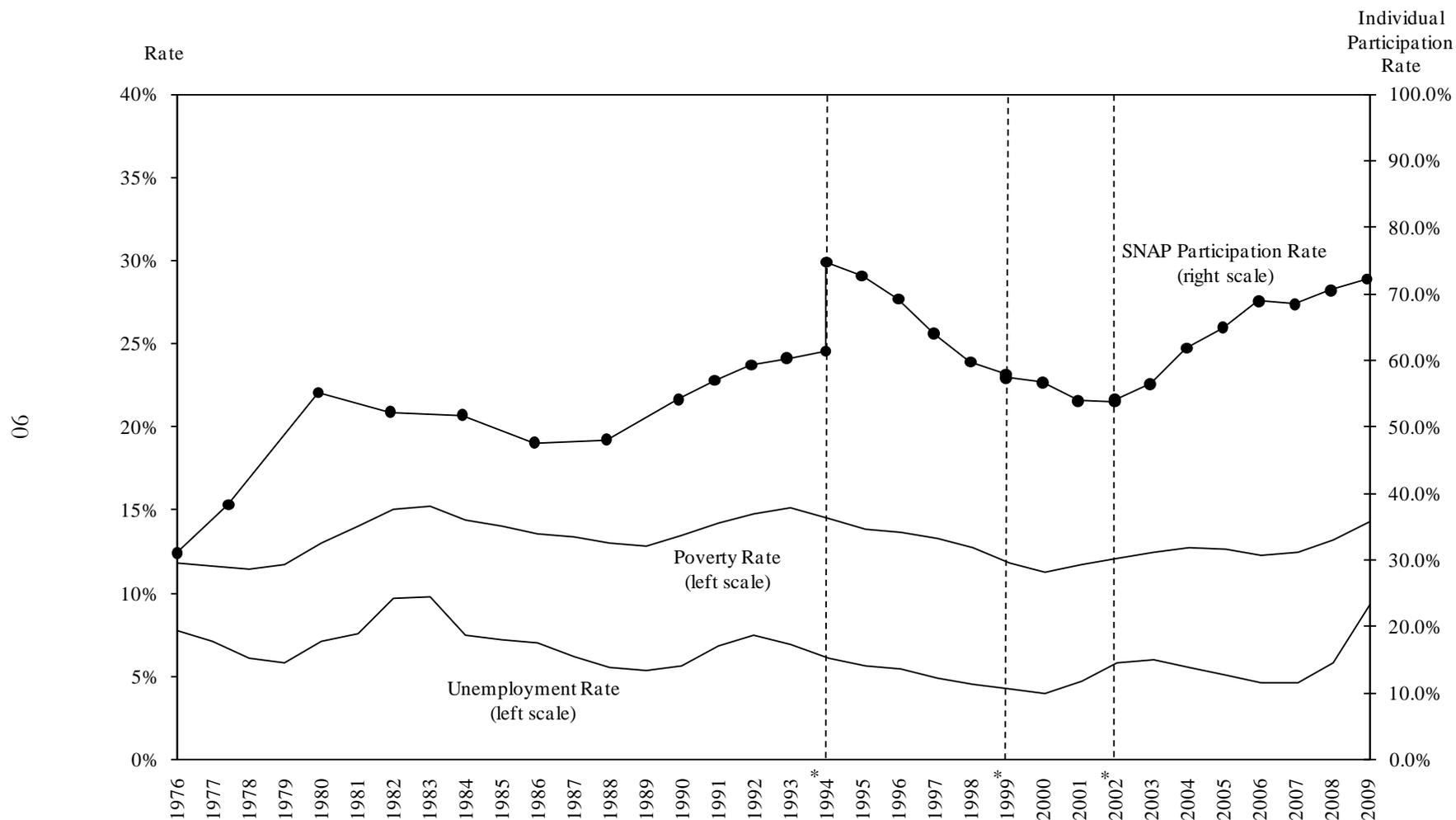
<sup>a</sup>Percentage change from preceding year.

<sup>b</sup>Percentage change from preceding year in output per hour, business sector.

<sup>c</sup>All civilian workers.

<sup>d</sup>Percentage change from preceding year in the implicit price deflator for Gross Domestic Product.

Figure F.1. Trends in SNAP Individual Participation Rates, Poverty Rates, and Unemployment Rates, 1976–2009



Sources: Participation rates from SNAP Program Operations data, SNAP QC data, and CPS ASEC data for the years shown. Poverty rates from U.S. Bureau of the Census, Poverty in the United States. Unemployment rates from Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

\* There are breaks in the time series in 1994, 1999, and 2002 due to revisions in the methodology for determining eligibility.

**Table F.3A. Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Income Limits**

Legislation	Income Limits
Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended (PL 88–525)	Net income had to be less than or equal to the maximum SNAP net income, which was tied to the maximum coupon allotment
Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 95–113) Effective 1/1/79	Net income had to be less than or equal to the poverty line
Food Stamp Amendments of 1979 and 1980 (PL 96–58 and PL 96–249)	Excluded energy assistance as income. Included income of ineligible aliens less prorated share
Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) of 1981 (PL 86–35) and Food Stamp Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1981 (PL 97–98) Effective 10/1/98	Gross income had to be less than or equal to 130% of the poverty line, except for elderly and disabled, who kept previous net income limit
Food Stamp Amendments of 1982 (PL 97–253) Effective 10/82 and Continuing Resolution of 1984 (PL 84–473)	Nonelderly and nondisabled subjected to both net and gross income limits
1985 Food Security Act (PL 99–198) Effective 5/86	Minor changes in treatment of income
1987 Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100–77)	Moved annual adjustment in income eligibility guidelines from July 1 to October 1 of each year
Hunger Prevention Act (HPA) of 1988 (PL 100–435)	No change
Farm, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 and 1991 (FACTA) (PL 102–237)	Certain types of educational assistance not counted as income
Amendments to FACTA of 1991	No change
The Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act of 1993 (MLCHRA) (PL 103–66)	Earnings of students excluded from income through age 21. Excluded as income 100% of vendor payments made to transitional housing facilities on behalf of homeless households and GA vendor payments for utility-cost assistance
The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) (PL 104–193)	Earnings of students excluded from income through age 17
The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 (BBA) (PL 105–33)	No change
Agricultural Research, Extension and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA) (PL 105–185)	No change
Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2001 (PL 106–387)	No change
Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	State options to exclude certain types of income not counted under the State’s TANF cash assistance or Medicaid programs and to treat legally obligated child support payments to a nonhousehold member as an income exclusion rather than a deduction
Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) (PL 110–246)	Combat-related military pay excluded from income
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) (PL 111–5)	No change

**Table F.3B. Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Asset Limits**

Legislation	Asset Limits
Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended (PL 88–525)	\$1,500; \$3,000 for elderly household of at least 2 individuals. Excluded vehicles used for employment or handicapped transportation
Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 95–113) Effective 1/1/79	\$1,750; \$3,000 for elderly household of at least 2 individuals; excluded first \$4,500 of the Fair Market Value for vehicles
Food Stamp Amendments of 1979 and 1980 (PL 96–58 and PL 96–249)	\$1,500; \$3,000 for elderly household of at least 2 individuals; excluded vehicles used for handicapped
OBRA of 1981 (PL 86–35) and Food Stamp Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1981 (PL 97–98) Effective 10/1/98	No change
Food Stamp Amendments of 1982 (PL 97–253) Effective 10/82 and Continuing Resolution of 1984 (PL 84–473)	State option to waive asset test for pure AFDC households passing gross income test. IRA KEOGH accounts counted as assets
1985 Food Security Act (PL 99–198) Effective 5/86	\$2,000; \$3,000 for households with elderly member(s) (including one-person households); Changed definition of countable resources
1987 Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100–77)	No change
HPA of 1988 (PL 100–435)	No change
FACTA (PL 102–237)	Nonliquid resources and those exempted by AFDC and SSI are not counted.
Amendments to FACTA of 1991	Same limits. Asset holding of AFDC and SSI recipients not counted.
MLCHRA (PL 103–66)	Raised the vehicle Fair Market Value asset limit to \$4,550 on 9/1/94, to \$4,600 on 10/1/95, and \$5,000 on 10/1/96, with annual cost-of-living adjustments thereafter; excluded vehicles necessary to carry food or water
PRWORA (PL 104–193)	Vehicle Fair Market Value asset limit raised to \$4,650, with no planned future cost-of-living adjustments
BBA (PL 105–33)	No change
AREERA (PL 105–185)	No change
Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2001 (PL 106–387)	Allowed States to use the vehicle limit they use in a TANF assistance program, if it would result in a lower attribution of resources for the household
Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	Increased the resource limit for households with a disabled member from \$2,000 to \$3,000
2008 Farm Bill (PL 110–246)	Indexed asset limits to inflation; excluded all tax-preferred education accounts and retirement accounts from countable resources
ARRA (PL 111–5)	No change

**Table F.3C. Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Benefits**

Legislation	Maximum Benefit	Minimum Benefit	Benefit Reduction Rate
Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended (PL 88-525)	Thrifty Food Plan. Indexed since 1971; indexed semiannually from 1973-1979 based on BLS food price index	Minimum benefit varied by household size	Basis of issuance tables (average 30% above lowest levels)
Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 95-113) Effective 1/1/79	Indexed semiannually based on Thrifty Food Plan components	\$10 for one- and two-person households only	30%
Food Stamp Amendments of 1979 and 1980 (PL 96-58 and PL 96-249)	Indexed annually in January based on September cost-of-plan components	No change	No change
OBRA of 1981 (PL 86-35) and Food Stamp Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1981 (PL97-98) Effective 10/1/98	Indexing frozen until 7/1/83; next adjustment 10/1/84 based on June cost-of-plan components	No change	No change
Food Stamp Amendments of 1982 (PL 97-253) Effective 10/82 and Continuing Resolution of 1984 (PL 84-473)	Indexed to 99% of Thrifty Food Plan cost; changed back to 100% by PL 98-473; last step in benefit calculation rounded down	No change	No change
1985 Food Security Act (PL 99-198) Effective 5/86	No change	No change	No change
1987 Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100-77)	No change	No change	No change
HPA of 1988 (PL 100-435)	Incremental indexing to 103% of Thrifty Food Plan by FY 1991 and thereafter	No change	No change
FACTA (PL 102-237)	No change	Required annual adjustments to the \$10 minimum benefit	No change
Amendments to FACTA of 1991	No change*	No change	No change
MLCHRA (PL 103-66)	No change	No change	No change
PRWORA (PL 104-193)	Reduced to 100% of Thrifty Food Plan for Contiguous U.S. and District of Columbia; Alaska and Hawaii remained at 1996 levels	Removed requirement for indexing of minimum benefit	No change
BBA (PL 105-33)	No change	No change	No change
AREERA (PL 105-185)	No change	No change	No change
Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2001 (PL 106-387)	No change	No change	No change
Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	No change	No change	No change
2008 Farm Bill (PL 110-246)	No change	Increased for 1- and 2-person households from \$10 to 8% of maximum benefit of 1-person households	No change
ARRA (PL 111-5)	Increased to 113.6% of June 2008 value of Thrifty Food Plan effective April 2009	Adjusted for 1- and 2-person households April 2009	No change

**Table F.3D. Selected Features of SNAP Under Past legislation—Deductions**

Legislation	Deductions
Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended (PL 88-525)	Payroll; 10% of earnings up to \$30; child care; education; medical over \$10; alimony or child support; casualty losses; shelter in excess of 30% of net income
Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 95-113) Effective 1/1/79	Standard \$60; indexed semi-annually to CPI nonfood components; 20% of earnings; child care up to \$75; shelter in excess of 50% of net, not to exceed \$80 in combination with child care; limit indexed annually in July based on shelter-fuel-utilities component of the CPI
Food Stamp Amendments of 1979 and 1980 (PL 96-58 and PL 96-249)	1980 Act: standard deduction and shelter/child care cap indexed annually in Jan. based on Sept./Sept. change; 1979 Act: elderly and disabled not subjected to the shelter deduction maximum and allowed medical expenses over \$35*
OBRA of 1981 (PL 86-35) and Food Stamp Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1981 (PL97-98) Effective 10/1/98	18% of earnings; shelter/child care cap set at \$115 with next inflation adjustment on 7/1/83, then on 10/1/84, and each October thereafter
Food Stamp Amendments of 1982 (PL 97-253) Effective 10/82 and Continuing Resolution of 1984 (PL 84-473)	Standard deduction raised to \$89; next inflation adjustment delayed until 10/1/83; limited use of standard utility expense allowances
1985 Food Security Act (PL 99-198) Effective 5/86	20% of earnings; separate cap of \$147 on shelter deduction with indexed increases; separate cap of \$160 on dependent care not indexed
1987 Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100-77)	Increased cap on shelter deduction for all households certified after 10/1/87
HPA of 1988 (PL 100-435)	Dependent care deduction increased to \$160 per month per dependent, rather than per household
FACTA (PL 102-237)	No change
Amendments to FACTA of 1991	No change
MLCHRA (PL 103-66)	Increased cap on shelter deductions for all households to \$231 after 7/1/94 and to \$247 after 10/1/95; raised the dependent care deduction cap to \$200 a month for each child under the age of 2 and \$175 a month for all other dependents
PRWORA (PL 104-193)	Standard deduction frozen at current levels; raised excess shelter deduction to \$250 on 1/1/97, to \$275 on 10/1/98, to \$300 on 10/1/00
BBA (PL 105-33)	No change
AREERA (PL 105-185)	No change
Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2001 (PL 106-387)	Increased the excess shelter cap to \$340 in fiscal year 2001 and then indexed the cap to changes in the Consumer Price Index for all consumers each year, beginning in fiscal year 2002
Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	Changed standard deduction to vary according to household size and be adjusted annually for cost-of-living increases; allowed States to simplify the SUA if they elect to use it rather than actual utility costs for all households; also allowed States to use a standard deduction of \$143 per month for homeless households with some shelter expenses
2008 Farm Bill (PL 110-246)	Raised the minimum standard deduction for households with one to three members from \$134 to \$144 for FY 2009 and indexes it to inflation starting in FY 2010; eliminated the dependent care deduction cap
ARRA (PL 111-5)	No change

\* A provision to reduce the medical deduction from \$35 to \$25 was repealed in OBRA and never implemented.

**Table F.3E. Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Accounting Period, Categorical Eligibility**

Legislation	Accounting Period	Categorical Eligibility
Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended (PL 88-525)	Prospective month	Public assistance households automatically eligible
Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 95-113) Effective 1/1/79	Prospective month	Public assistance households not automatically eligible
Food Stamp Amendments of 1979 and 1980 (PL 96-58 and PL 96-249)	State option to use either prospective or retrospective with monthly report	No change
OBRA of 1981 (PL 86-35) and Food Stamp Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1981 (PL 97-98) Effective 10/1/98	Retrospective becomes mandatory 10/1/83 for some households, prospective for others	No change
Food Stamp Amendments of 1982 (PL 97-253) Effective 10/82 and Continuing Resolution of 1984 (PL 84-473)	Migrant workers, elderly and disabled households with no earnings exempt from monthly reporting	No change
1985 Food Security Act (PL 99-198) Effective 5/86	Retrospective budgeting and monthly reporting required for households with earnings or work history except migrant farmers and elderly or disabled	Categorical eligibility for pure AFDC or SSI households
1987 Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100-77)	Exempted seasonal farm workers and households in which all members are homeless from monthly reporting requirements	No change
HPA of 1988 (PL 100-435)	No change	No change
FACTA (PL 102-237)	No change	Expanded categorical eligibility to recipients of certain State and local general assistance payments
Amendments to FACTA of 1991	No change	No change
MLCHRA (PL 103-66)	No change	No change
PRWORA (PL 104-193)	No change	Categorical eligibility for pure TANF (instead of pure AFDC) households
BBA (PL 105-33)	No change	No change
AREERA (PL 105-185)	No change	No change
Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2001 (PL 106-387)	No change	No change
Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	No change	No change
2008 Farm Bill (PL 110-246)	No change	No change
ARRA (PL 111-5)	No change	No change

**Table F.3F. Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Work Registration Requirements and Time Limits**

Legislation	Work Registration Requirements and Time Limits
Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended (PL 88-525)	Required work registration and employment as a condition of eligibility for able-bodied adults between 18 and 65 years, except for individuals with responsibility for care of a dependent child or incapacitated adult; students; or individuals employed 30 hours/week
Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 95-113) Effective 1/1/79	Lowered age for individuals required to work from 65 to 60 years; added job search as a work requirement; lowered age for caretaker exemption from 18 to 12 years
Food Stamp Amendments of 1979 and 1980 (PL 96-58 and PL 96-249)	No change
OBRA of 1981 (PL 86-35) and Food Stamp Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1981 (PL 97-98) Effective 10/1/98	Applied disqualification for voluntarily quitting a job to participants as well as applicants; lowered age for caretaker exemption to 6 years old
Food Stamp Amendments of 1982 (PL 97-253) Effective 10/82 and Continuing Resolution of 1984 (PL 84-473)	No change
1985 Food Security Act (PL 99-198) Effective 5/86	Disqualified only violating member rather than entire household unless that member was also head of household; required all States to implement an E&T program by April 1, 1987
1987 Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100-77)	No change
HPA of 1988 (PL 100-435)	No change
FACTA (PL 102-237)	No change
Amendments to FACTA of 1991	No change
MLCHRA (PL 103-66)	No change
PRWORA (PL 104-193)	Able-bodied adults without dependents required to work at least 20 hours per week in a job or qualified training program; if individual is subject to, but not complying with, the requirement, he or she is limited to 3 months of benefits in any 36-month period; minimum disqualification periods for individuals who fail to comply with work requirements range from 1 month to permanently, depending on the number of violations
BBA (PL 105-33)	Increased funds for SNAP Employment and Training programs but restricted the use of the funds (requiring them to earmark 80% for ABAWDs); made the funds available until expended; allowed States to grant discretionary exemptions from the time limits for up to 15% of the State's unwaived able-bodied caseload
AREERA (PL 105-185)	No change
Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2001 (PL 106-387)	No change
Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	Authorized additional funding for States that pledge to offer work slots to all unemployed childless adults subject to the 3-month time limit and eliminated the requirement that 80% of unmatched funds be used for nondisabled childless adults
2008 Farm Bill (PL 110-246)	Permitted the use of E&T funds for job retention services for up to 90 days after individuals who received E&T services gain employment
ARRA (PL 111-5)	Allowed States to suspend the time limit on benefits for nondisabled adults without dependents from 4/1/09 through 9/30/10

**Table F.3G. Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Treatment of Legally-resident Noncitizens**

Legislation	Treatment of Legally-resident Noncitizens*
Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended (PL 88-525)	No disqualifications
Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 95-113) Effective 1/1/79	No disqualifications
Food Stamp Amendments of 1979 and 1980 (PL 96-58 and PL 96-249)	No disqualifications
OBRA of 1981 (PL 86-35) and Food Stamp Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1981 (PL 97-98) Effective 10/1/98	The 1980 amendments required certification workers to report an ineligible alien to INS; income and assets of aliens' sponsors were deemed to alien for 3 years after entry into the country
Food Stamp Amendments of 1982 (PL 97-253) Effective 10/82 and Continuing Resolution of 1984 (PL 84-473)	No disqualifications
1985 Food Security Act (PL 99-198) Effective 5/86	No disqualifications
1987 Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100-77)	No disqualifications
HPA of 1988 (PL 100-435)	No disqualifications
FACTA (PL 102-237)	No disqualifications
Amendments to FACTA of 1991	No disqualifications
MLCHRA (PL 103-66)	No disqualifications
PRWORA (PL 104-193)	Permanent resident aliens disqualified unless they have 40 quarters of qualified work history in the United States or are currently or were formerly members of the U.S. Armed Forces; members of their family also exempt; Refugees, asylees, and deportees eligible for 5 years after entering the U.S.
BBA (PL 105-33)	No change
AREERA (PL 105-185)	Restored eligibility to permanent resident aliens lawfully in the United States on August 22, 1996 and disabled, blind, or under age 18, or were 65 or older on August 22, 1996; extended eligibility for refugees, asylees, and deportees from 5 to 7 years after entering the U.S.
Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2001 (PL 106-387)	No change
Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	Restored eligibility to qualified noncitizens otherwise eligible for SNAP and who: are receiving disability benefits regardless of date of entry (effective FY 2003); are under 18 regardless of date of entry (effective FY 2004); or have lived in the U.S. for 5 years as a qualified noncitizen (effective April 2003)
2008 Farm Bill (PL 110-246)	No change
ARRA (PL 111-5)	No change

\* Unauthorized immigrants have always been ineligible for SNAP.

**Table F.3H. Selected Features of SNAP under Past Legislation—Other Changes**

Legislation	Other Changes
Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended (PL 88–525)	Nationwide program
Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 95–113) Effective 1/1/79	Eliminated purchase requirement
Food Stamp Amendments of 1979 and 1980 (PL 96–58 and PL 96–249)	Increased State incentives for reducing error; SSNs required; limits on eligible students; residents of shelters for battered women and disabled in small groups may participate; established quality control system
OBRA of 1981 (PL 86–35) and Food Stamp Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1981 (PL 97–98) Effective 10/1/81	Tightened definition of household, no extra benefits for strikers, prorated first month benefits; for Puerto Rico, replaced the FSP with a block grant Nutrition Assistance Program
Food Stamp Amendments of 1982 (PL 97–253) Effective 10/82 and Continuing Resolution of 1984 (PL 84–473)	Replaced three-tiered incentive system with increased administrative funding for States with error rates below 5%, limited student eligibility, benefits rounded down, job search requirements, Puerto Rico cashout prohibited; SNAP household definition altered; no initial-month benefits less than \$10. SSU and SS COLA adjustments disregarded up to 3 months; new definition of disabled
1985 Food Security Act (PL 99–198) Effective 5/86	New definition of disabled; Puerto Rico block grant funds; students in JTPA exempt from categorical restriction; residents of publicly operated mental health centers may participate
1987 Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100–77)	Outreach efforts for homeless individuals and other hard-to-serve groups; simplified application process for these groups; expanded eligibility for expedited source
HPA of 1988 (PL 100–435)	Expanded the definition of disabled; excluded advanced EITC payments as income
FACTA (PL 102–237)	Rules for student eligibility modified
Amendments to FACTA of 1991	All Title IV payments and Bureau of Indian Affairs educational assistance excluded from the Program’s countable income [Higher Education Amendments of 1992 (PL 102–325)]
The Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act of 1993 (PL 103–66)	Simplified the household definition by allowing individuals who live together but do not purchase and prepare food together to be in separate Program households; spouses still must be in the same household. Effective 9/1/94
PRWORA (PL 104–193)	Children under age 22 living with parents must apply as part of the parents’ household even if the child is married or has children of his/her own. All states must convert food stamp benefits from paper coupons to electronic benefit transfer (EBT) systems by 10/1/02.
BBA (PL 105–33)	None
AREERA (PL 105–185)	None
Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2001 (PL 106–387)	None
Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	Allowed States to offer transitional SNAP benefits for up to 5 months after households lose TANF cash assistance and allowed States to extend semiannual reporting of changes to all households not exempt from periodic reporting
2008 Farm Bill (PL 110–246)	Renamed the Food Stamp Program the “Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program”; renamed the Food Stamp Act of 1977 the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008. Prohibited issuance of paper coupons effective 6/18/08; food stamp coupons no longer redeemable at stores after 8/17/09. Allowed States to place all households on simplified reporting. Allowed State agencies to provide transitional food stamp benefits to households that cease to receive cash assistance. Allowed applicants to sign an application through a recorded verbal assent over the telephone.
ARRA (PL 111–5)	None

**APPENDIX G**  
**CHANGES IN THE CPS ASEC OVER TIME**

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

**Table G.1. Changes in the CPS ASEC Over Time**

CPS ASEC Year	Data Year	Changes in Design or Weighting from Previous Year
79	78	Changes in metro/nonmetro definitions; new, more detailed income questions were introduced for 2 rotation groups
80	79	Definition of adult changed from age 14 to age 15; new concept of families and headship status; new income questions were introduced for all rotation groups
81	80	New weighting procedure based on 1980 Census was introduced which increased the overall population by 2.3% and had a disproportionate impact on Hispanics
82	81	Top coding of income variables was increased from \$50,000 to \$75,000
83	82	New industry and occupation coding; new definition of group quarters; the poverty index was modified slightly (deleting the farm/nonfarm dimension)
84	83	The March 1984 file was issued twice; in the second (unofficial) version, the Bureau of the Census introduced the revised weighting procedure developed for the March 1985 CPS
85	84	Revised weighting procedures—specifically, the control on Hispanics was changed, causing a slight increase in poverty with disproportionate impacts on the Hispanic population, male unrelated individuals, and individuals in related subfamilies; changes in the designation of metro/nonmetro, farm/nonfarm, central city/noncentral city status
86	85	More metro/nonmetro changes
87	86	None
88	87	None
89	88	Revised processing procedures increased income overall and reduced poverty; poverty rate changed more severely for blacks and individuals in selected age ranges
90	89	None
91	90	None
92	91	None
93	92(r)	New population controls based on 1990 census and adjustments for the census undercount increased the poverty population; largest increases in poverty rates were for Hispanic families, families with single female householders, white children, and individuals in unrelated subfamilies
94	93	Survey was redesigned to improve the measurement of labor force concepts and wording of questions, and to implement a computerized questionnaire
95	94	None
96	95	Sample reduction; revised earnings topcoding—instead of topcoding earnings variables at 99,999, topcoded records were assigned the mean earnings for topcoded individuals with similar characteristics; revised race edit and allocation; (caution is urged when comparing 1995 and 1996 data on race groups)
97	96	None
98	97	None
99	98	None
00	99	Rewighted based on Census 2000
01	00	Rewighted based on Census 2000, expanded sample size
02	01	Weights based on Census 2000
03	02	Expanded racial categories
04	03	None
05	04	None
06	05	None
07	06	None
08	07	None
09	08	None
10	09	Replicate weights added to the file, retroactive to 2005

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

**APPENDIX H**  
**SNAP ELIGIBILITY PARAMETERS**

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

**Table H.1. Selected SNAP Eligibility Parameters, 1976 to 2009**

Analysis Year		September 1976 Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended			February 1978 Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended			August 1980 Food Stamp Act of 1977 as Amended; Effective Late 1978 / Early 1979			August 1982 OBRA 1981 as Amended in 1981; Effective 10/81		
Gross Income Eligibility		No test									<= 1.3 * Poverty Line		
Net Income Eligibility		<= Maximum SNAP Income						<= Poverty Line					
Asset Eligibility		\$1,500; \$3,000 for elderly households with at least 2 members											
Minimum Benefit		Varies by household size						\$10 for 1- and 2-person households; \$0 for all others					
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		No Automatic Eligibility			Automatically Eligible			No Automatic Eligibility					
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit (household size)						Benefit = maximum benefit minus 30% of net income					
SSI Cashout States		California, Wisconsin, Massachusetts											
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	245	307	273	262	328	286	316	397	365	390	490	450
	2	322	413	407	344	447	427	418	524	481	519	650	597
	3	433	593	580	460	633	607	520	650	598	647	810	745
	4	553	753	740	580	807	773	621	777	715	775	970	892
	5	660	893	880	687	960	920	723	904	831	904	1,130	1,040
	6	787	1,073	1,053	827	1,147	1,100	825	1,030	948	1,032	1,290	1,187
	7	873	1,187	1,167	913	1,273	1,220	926	1,157	1,065	1,180	1,450	1,335
	8	993	1,353	1,333	1,047	1,453	1,393	1,028	1,284	1,181	1,289	1,610	1,482
	additional	+ 127	+ 167	+ 166	+ 133	+ 180	+ 173	+ 102	+ 127	+ 117	+ 129	+ 160	+ 142
Monthly Maximum SNAP Allotment	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	50	68	66	52	72	70	63	98	84	70	108	95
	2	92	124	122	96	134	128	115	180	158	128	197	175
	3	130	178	174	138	190	182	165	258	226	183	293	250
	4	166	226	222	174	242	232	209	327	287	233	359	318
	5	198	268	264	206	288	276	248	388	341	277	426	378
	6	236	322	316	248	344	330	298	466	409	332	512	453
	7	262	356	350	274	382	366	329	515	452	367	565	501
	8	298	406	400	314	436	418	376	589	517	419	646	572
	additional	+ 38	+ 50	+ 50	+ 40	+ 54	+ 52	+ 47	+ 74	+ 65	+ 53	+ 81	+ 72

**Table H.1 (continued)**

Analysis Year		August 1984 OBRA As Amended in 1982; Effective 10/82			August 1986 Food Security Act of 1985; Effective 5/86			August 1988 1987 Homeless Assistance Act; Effective 7/87			August 1990 Leland Hunger Prevention Act of 1988		
Gross Income Eligibility		<= 1.3 * Poverty Line											
Net Income Eligibility		<= Poverty Line											
Asset Eligibility		\$1,500; \$3,000 for elderly households with 2 or more members			\$2,000; \$3,000 for elderly households								
Minimum Benefit		\$10 for 1- and 2-person households; \$0 for all others											
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		No Automatic Eligibility			Automatically Eligible								
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit minus 30% of net income											
SSI Cashout States		CA, WI, MA			California, Wisconsin								
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	415	520	478	447	559	515	459	572	526	499	624	573
	2	560	701	645	604	755	695	617	770	709	699	836	769
	3	705	882	811	760	950	875	775	969	891	839	1,049	965
	4	850	1,063	978	917	1,146	1,055	934	1,167	1,074	1,009	1,261	1,160
	5	995	1,244	1,145	1,074	1,342	1,235	1,092	1,365	1,256	1,179	1,474	1,356
	6	1,140	1,425	1,311	1,230	1,538	1,415	1,250	1,564	1,439	1,349	1,686	1,552
	7	1,285	1,605	1,478	1,387	1,732	1,595	1,409	1,762	1,621	1,519	1,899	1,748
	8	1,430	1,786	1,645	1,544	1,930	1,775	1,567	1,960	1,804	1,689	2,111	1,944
	additional	+ 145	+ 181	+ 167	+ 157	+ 196	+ 180	+ 158	+ 198	+ 183	+ 170	+ 213	+ 196
Monthly Maximum SNAP Allotment	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	76	109	108	80	111	124	87	113	133	99	123	151
	2	139	200	198	147	204	228	159	207	244	182	227	276
	3	199	286	283	211	293	327	228	297	350	260	325	396
	4	253	364	360	268	372	415	290	378	444	331	413	503
	5	301	432	427	318	442	493	344	448	527	393	490	598
	6	361	518	513	382	530	592	413	538	633	472	588	717
	7	399	473	567	422	586	654	457	595	700	521	650	793
	8	457	655	648	483	670	748	522	680	800	596	743	906
	additional	+ 57	+ 82	+ 81	+ 60	+ 84	+ 94	+ 65	+ 85	+ 100	+ 75	+ 93	+ 113

**Table H.1 (continued)**

Analysis Year		August 1991 FACTA of 1991			August 1992 FACTA of 1991 and Amendments			August 1993 <sup>a</sup> FACTA of 1991 and Amendments		
Gross Income Eligibility		<= 1.3 * Poverty Line								
Net Income Eligibility		<= Poverty Line								
Asset Eligibility		\$2,000; \$3,000 for elderly households								
Minimum Benefit		\$10 for 1- and 2-person households; \$0 for all others								
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		Automatically Eligible (AFDC or SSI)			Automatically Eligible (AFDC, SSI, or GA)					
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit minus 30% of net income								
SSI Cashout States		California, Wisconsin			California only					
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	524	654	603	552	691	635	568	709	653
	2	702	877	808	740	926	851	766	957	881
	3	880	1,100	1,013	929	1,161	1,068	965	1,205	1,110
	4	1,059	1,324	1,218	1,117	1,396	1,285	1,163	1,454	1,338
	5	1,237	1,547	1,428	1,305	1,631	1,501	1,361	1,702	1,566
	6	1,415	1,770	1,628	1,494	1,866	1,718	1,560	1,950	1,795
	7	1,594	1,994	1,833	1,682	2,101	1,935	1,758	2,199	2,023
	8	1,772	2,217	2,038	1,870	2,336	2,151	1,956	2,447	2,251
	additional	+ 179	224	+ 205	+ 189	+ 235	+ 217	+ 199	+ 249	+ 229
Monthly Maximum SNAP Allotment	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	105	137	172	111	142	181	111	143	182
	2	193	252	316	203	261	333	203	262	335
	3	277	361	452	292	374	477	292	376	480
	4	352	459	574	370	475	606	370	477	609
	5	418	545	682	440	564	720	440	567	724
	6	502	655	819	528	677	864	528	680	868
	7	555	723	905	584	748	955	584	752	960
	8	634	827	1,034	667	855	1,091	667	859	1,097
	additional	+ 79	+ 103	+ 129	+ 83	+ 107	+ 136	+ 83	+ 107	+ 137

Table H.1 (continued)

Analysis Year		September 1994			September 1995 <sup>b</sup> Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act of 1993			September 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996		
Gross Income Eligibility		<= 1.3 * Poverty Line								
Net Income Eligibility		<= Poverty Line								
Asset Eligibility		\$2,000; \$3,000 for elderly households								
Minimum Benefit		\$10 for 1- and 2-person households; \$0 for all others								
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		Automatically Eligible (AFDC/TANF, SSI, or GA)								
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit minus 30% of net income								
SSI Cashout States		California only								
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	581	725	670	614	767	706	623	779	718
	2	786	982	905	820	1,025	944	836	1,045	963
	3	991	1,239	1,140	1,027	1,284	1,181	1,050	1,312	1,208
	4	1,196	1,495	1,375	1,234	1,542	1,419	1,263	1,579	1,453
	5	1,401	1,752	1,610	1,440	1,800	1,656	1,476	1,845	1,698
	6	1,606	2,009	1,845	1,647	2,059	1,894	1,690	2,112	1,943
	7	1,811	2,265	2,080	1,854	2,317	2,131	1,903	2,379	2,188
	8	2,016	2,522	2,315	2,060	2,575	2,369	2,116	2,645	2,433
	additional	+ 205	+ 257	+ 235	+ 207	+ 259	+ 238	+ 214	+ 267	+ 245
Monthly Maximum SNAP Allotment	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	112	147	187	115	147	193	119	153	198
	2	206	271	343	212	271	354	218	280	364
	3	295	388	492	304	388	508	313	401	522
	4	375	492	625	386	492	645	397	510	663
	5	446	585	742	459	585	766	472	605	787
	6	535	702	890	550	702	919	566	726	945
	7	591	776	984	608	776	1,016	626	803	1,044
	8	676	887	1,125	695	887	1,161	716	918	1,193
	additional	+ 85	+ 111	+ 141	+ 87	+ 111	+ 145	+90	+ 115	+ 149

Table H.1 (continued)

Analysis Year		September 1997			September 1998			September 1999 Agricultural Research, Extension and Education Reform Act of 1998; Effective November 1, 1998		
Gross Income Eligibility		<= 1.3 * Poverty Line								
Net Income Eligibility		<= Poverty Line								
Asset Eligibility		\$2,000; \$3,000 for elderly households								
Minimum Benefit		\$10 for 1- and 2-person households; \$0 for all others								
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		Automatically Eligible (TANF, SSI, or GA)								
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit (household size) - .3 x SNAP Net Income								
SSI Cashout States		California only								
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	645	805	743	658	823	756	671	840	772
	2	864	1,079	994	885	1,106	1,017	905	1,131	1,040
	3	1,082	1,352	1,245	1,111	1,390	1,278	1,138	1,423	1,309
	4	1,300	1,625	1,495	1,338	1,673	1,539	1,371	1,715	1,577
	5	1,519	1,899	1,746	1,565	1,956	1,800	1,605	2,006	1,845
	6	1,737	2,172	1,997	1,791	2,240	2,060	1,838	2,298	2,114
	7	1,955	2,445	2,248	2,018	2,523	2,321	2,071	2,590	2,382
	8	2,174	2,719	2,499	2,245	2,806	2,582	2,305	2,881	2,650
	additional	+ 219	+ 274	+251	+ 227	+ 284	+ 261	+ 234	+ 292	+ 269
Monthly Maximum SNAP Benefits	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	120	153	198	122	154	197	125	157	197
	2	220	280	364	224	283	361	230	287	362
	3	315	401	522	321	405	517	329	412	518
	4	400	510	663	408	514	657	419	523	658
	5	475	605	787	485	611	780	497	621	781
	6	570	726	945	582	733	936	597	746	938
	7	630	803	1,044	643	810	1,035	659	824	1,036
	8	720	918	1,193	735	926	1,183	754	942	1,185
	additional	+ 90	+ 115	+ 149	+92	+ 116	+ 148	+ 94	+ 118	+ 148

**Table H.1 (continued)**

Analysis Year		September 2000			FY 2001			FY 2002		
Gross Income Eligibility		<= 1.3 * Poverty Line								
Net Income Eligibility		<= Poverty Line								
Asset Eligibility		\$2,000; \$3,000 for elderly households								
Minimum Benefit		\$10 for 1- and 2-person households; \$0 for all others								
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		Automatically Eligible (TANF, SSI, or GA)								
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit (household size) - .3 x SNAP Net Income								
SSI Cashout States		California only								
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	687	860	791	696	870	800	716	895	825
	2	922	1,154	1,061	938	1,172	1,078	968	1,210	1,114
	3	1,157	1,447	1,331	1,180	1,475	1,356	1,220	1,525	1,403
	4	1,392	1,740	1,601	1,421	1,770	1,635	1,471	1,840	1,692
	5	1,627	2,034	1,871	1,663	2,080	1,913	1,723	2,155	1,981
	6	1,862	2,327	2,141	1,905	2,382	2,191	1,975	2,470	2,270
	7	2,097	2,620	2,411	2,146	2,685	2,470	2,226	2,785	2,560
	8	2,332	2,914	2,681	2,388	2,987	2,748	2,478	3,100	2,849
	additional	+ 235	+ 270	+270	+ 242	+ 303	+ 279	+ 252	+ 315	+ 290
Monthly Maximum SNAP Benefits	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	127	158	199	130	160	199	135	167	204
	2	234	290	365	238	294	366	248	307	374
	3	335	415	523	341	421	524	356	440	536
	4	426	528	664	434	535	665	452	559	680
	5	506	627	789	515	635	790	537	663	808
	6	607	752	947	618	762	948	644	796	970
	7	671	831	1,047	683	842	1,048	712	880	1,072
	8	767	950	1,196	781	963	1,198	814	1,006	1,225
	additional	+ 96	+ 119	+ 150	+98	+ 120	+ 150	+ 102	+ 126	+ 153

**Table H.1 (continued)**

Analysis Year		FY 2003			FY 2004			FY 2005		
Gross Income Eligibility		≤ 1.3 * Poverty Line								
Net Income Eligibility		≤ Poverty Line								
Asset Eligibility		\$2,000; \$3,000 for elderly households								
Minimum Benefit		\$10 for 1- and 2-person households; \$0 for all others								
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		Automatically Eligible (TANF, SSI, or GA)								
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit (household size) - .3 x SNAP Net Income								
SSI Cashout States		California only								
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	739	924	850	749	935	861	776	970	892
	2	995	1,245	1,145	1,010	1,262	1,162	1,041	1,301	1,197
	3	1,252	1,565	1,440	1,272	1,590	1,463	1,306	1,633	1,502
	4	1,507	1,886	1,735	1,534	1,917	1,764	1,571	1,965	1,807
	5	1,765	2,207	2,030	1,795	2,245	2,065	1,836	2,296	2,112
	6	2,022	2,528	2,325	2,057	2,572	2,365	2,101	2,628	2,417
	7	2,279	2,849	2,620	2,319	2,900	2,666	2,366	2,960	2,722
	8	2,535	3,170	2,915	2,580	3,227	2,967	2,631	3,291	3,027
	additional	+ 257	+ 321	+295	+ 262	+ 328	+ 301	+ 265	+ 332	+ 305
Monthly Maximum SNAP Benefits	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	139	169	212	141	167	210	149	177	222
	2	256	309	389	259	307	386	274	324	408
	3	366	443	557	371	439	553	393	465	585
	4	465	563	707	471	558	702	499	590	742
	5	553	669	840	560	663	834	592	701	882
	6	664	803	1,008	672	795	1,001	711	841	1,058
	7	733	887	1,114	743	879	1,106	786	930	1,170
	8	838	1,014	1,273	849	1,005	1,264	898	1,063	1,337
	additional	+ 105	+ 127	+ 159	+106	+ 126	+ 158	+ 112	+ 133	+ 167

**Table H.1 (continued)**

Analysis Year		FY 2006			FY 2007			FY 2008		
Gross Income Eligibility		<= 1.3 * Poverty Line								
Net Income Eligibility		<= Poverty Line								
Asset Eligibility		\$2,000; \$3,000 for elderly households								
Minimum Benefit		\$10 for 1- and 2-person households; \$0 for all others								
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		Automatically Eligible (TANF, SSI, or GA)								
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit (household size) - .3 x SNAP Net Income								
SSI Cashout States		California only								
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	798	996	918	817	1,021	940	851	1,065	980
	2	1,070	1,336	1,230	1,100	1,375	1,265	1,141	1,427	1,313
	3	1,341	1,676	1,543	1,384	1,730	1,591	1,431	1,790	1,646
	4	1,613	2,016	1,855	1,667	2,084	1,917	1,721	2,152	1,980
	5	1,885	2,356	2,168	1,950	2,438	2,243	2,011	2,515	2,313
	6	2,156	2,696	2,480	2,234	2,792	2,569	2,301	2,877	2,646
	7	2,428	3,036	2,793	2,517	3,146	2,895	2,591	3,240	2,980
	8	2,700	3,376	3,105	2,800	3,500	3,220	2,881	3,602	3,313
	additional	+ 272	+ 340	+313	+ 284	+ 355	+ 326	+ 290	+ 363	+ 334
Monthly Maximum SNAP Benefits	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	152	181	229	155	183	240	162	194	258
	2	278	333	421	284	336	440	298	356	473
	3	399	477	602	408	482	630	426	510	678
	4	506	606	765	518	612	800	542	648	861
	5	601	720	909	615	726	950	643	770	1,022
	6	722	864	1,090	738	872	1,140	772	924	1,227
	7	798	955	1,205	816	964	1,260	853	1,021	1,356
	8	912	1,091	1,378	932	1,101	1,440	975	1,167	1,549
	additional	+ 114	+ 136	+ 172	+117	+ 138	+ 180	+ 122	+ 146	+ 194

**Table H.1 (continued)**

Analysis Year		October 2008 through March 2009 <sup>c</sup>			April 2009 through September 2009 <sup>c</sup>		
Gross Income Eligibility		<= 1.3 * Poverty Line					
Net Income Eligibility		<= Poverty Line					
Asset Eligibility		\$2,000; \$3,000 for elderly households					
Minimum Benefit		\$14 for 1- and 2-person households in contiguous U.S; \$17 in AK; \$22 in HI; \$0 for all other household sizes			\$16 for 1- and 2-person households in contiguous U.S; \$19 in AK; \$25 in HI; \$0 for all other household sizes		
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		Automatically Eligible (TANF, SSI, or GA)					
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit (household size) - .3 x SNAP Net Income					
SSI Cashout States		California only					
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	867	1,084	997	867	1,084	997
	2	1,167	1,459	1,342	1,167	1,459	1,342
	3	1,467	1,834	1,687	1,467	1,834	1,687
	4	1,767	2,209	2,032	1,767	2,209	2,032
	5	2,067	2,584	2,377	2,067	2,584	2,377
	6	2,367	2,959	2,722	2,367	2,959	2,722
	7	2,667	3,334	3,067	2,667	3,334	3,067
	8	2,967	3,709	3,412	2,967	3,709	3,412
additional	+ 300	+ 375	+ 345	+ 300	+ 375	+ 345	
Monthly Maximum SNAP Benefits	Household Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	176	210	276	200	239	314
	2	323	385	506	367	438	575
	3	463	552	725	526	627	824
	4	588	701	921	668	797	1,046
	5	698	833	1,094	793	946	1,243
	6	838	999	1,313	952	1,135	1,491
	7	926	1,105	1,451	1,052	1,255	1,648
	8	1,058	1,263	1,658	1,202	1,434	1,884
additional	+ 132	+ 158	+ 207	+ 150	+ 179	+ 236	

Notes: Eligibility parameters are for the 50 States and the District of Columbia. Puerto Rico is excluded from data for 1976 and 1978 in order to be consistent with other years, and Guam and the Virgin Islands are excluded for all years.

<sup>a</sup>A reduction in the maximum benefit between 1992 and 1993 was prevented by an amendment to the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 102-351).

<sup>b</sup>A reduction in the Alaska maximum benefit between 1994 and 1995 was prevented by the Federal Crop Insurance Reform and Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (PL 103-354).

<sup>c</sup>The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provided for maximum and minimum allotment increases in April 2009.

**This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.**

## Current Perspectives on SNAP Participation

---

### Titles in this series (continued from inside front cover):

**Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: January 1989**

Carole Trippe and Pat Doyle

July 1992

**The Effects of Food Stamps on Food Consumption: A Review of the Literature**

Thomas M. Fraker

October 1990

**Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: August 1985**

Pat Doyle

April 1990

**Determinants of Participation in the Food Stamp Program: A Review of the Literature**

Susan Allin and Harold Beebout

November 1989

**Estimating Rates of Participation in the Food Stamp Program: A Review of the Literature**

Carole Trippe

November 1989

**Food Stamp Program Participation Rates Among the Poverty Population, 1980–1987**

Carole Trippe and Harold Beebout

November 1988